



**BRIGHT
HARBOUR**

**And
Good**



Interests, needs and concerns around food: the public's view in Scotland

Key findings for Scotland

Based on qualitative & quantitative research conducted for FSS jointly with the FSA

June 2022

**Food
Standards
Scotland**

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Introduction

This report presents key findings from a comprehensive review of public interests in food carried out in Scotland.

The research is part of a larger piece of work covering the whole of the UK, commissioned by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and Food Standards Scotland (FSS). It aimed to provide a detailed 'snapshot' of people's interests, needs and concerns around food and is published separately by the FSA.

The research covers what key food interests the public would like to see represented and protected on their behalf - in relation to food hygiene and safety, and diet and nutrition, but also more widely.

The majority of the findings emerging from Scotland are broadly similar to those across the rest of the UK. This report highlights the similarities and some of the more subtle differences that emerged in Scotland.

Note that differences between Scotland and the other nations of the UK (EWNI – England, Wales and Northern Ireland) in the survey results are identified where they are *statistically* significant (at the $p=.05$ level) by an asterix*. This does not necessarily mean that the differences are large but that they represent a 'real' difference at the population level.

Method and Sample

UK data were gathered between October 2021 and January 2022 using multiple methods over several stages:

- **A rapid mapping of existing evidence** shaped project objectives and materials
- **A 'People's Voice Board'** of 8 UK people guided the project throughout
- **75 'general public' participants were engaged in qualitative research** via group workshops (of which 15 participants were in Scotland)
- **20 'targeted groups' participants** were engaged via a mix of depth interviewing and remote ethnography, boosting understanding of typically 'less heard' groups (of which 3 were in Scotland)
- **A nationally representative online survey** of 6175 respondents across the four nations of the UK validated and extended the qualitative research findings (sample for Scotland 1072 respondents)

Further information about the wider UK-wide research with the FSA, including a detailed Technical Report on the methodology and measures of food insecurity and other key survey details, are available at: [UK Public's Interests, Needs and Concerns Around Food | Food Standards Agency](#)

Note that the statistics and quotes used in this report are drawn from the qualitative and survey data in Scotland only.

Key Findings: 1 to 6

Summary

The key findings in Scotland, as in the UK as a whole, included:

Key Finding 1: Socio-demographic factors shape clear inequalities, and food security is under threat.

Key Finding 2: People want everyone to have access to safe, healthy, affordable food, but they worry about the future, and aren't sure anyone can change anything.

Key Finding 3: Trust in safety and hygiene of food is high, but it's lower for people who are on lower incomes or less food secure.

Key Finding 4: People worry over whether high food standards will be maintained in the future. The implications of new trade deals after Brexit drive higher concerns in Scotland.

Key Finding 5: The public also see processed food and animal welfare as safety concerns - if standards are not maintained and monitored, these issues are perceived to present a risk to safety and health.

Key Finding 6: Allergens labelling and management represent a substantial area of concern.

Key Findings 7 to 11:

Summary

Key Finding 7: People want it to be easier to access and choose healthy, nutritious food. This relates to the choices available, food marketing, food labelling and information and guidance.

Key Finding 8: There are additional barriers for people with serious health issues or allergies, disabled and neuro-divergent people and more urgency in these groups around eating well.

Key Finding 9: People care about the wider environment and ethical issues, but they don't feel they can make a difference - so they want help from those in power.

Key Finding 10: Waste is a flashpoint issue - both packaging waste and food waste.

Key Finding 11: There is high interest in supporting local food systems, British farming and 'high standard' food systems that respect all involved. There are heightened concerns in Scotland over how Brexit will impact on these issues.

Context:

Across the UK, consumers felt that the food system is not working for everybody

Uncertainty, pressure and corporate power

Key Finding 1:

Socio-demographic factors shape clear inequalities, and food security is under threat.

The main UK-wide report explores widespread challenges experienced by the UK public, including people in Scotland, around equitable access to safe, healthy, affordable food that aligns their values.

These challenges are more pronounced for people with certain characteristics or who are disadvantaged in one or more ways (e.g. in relation to income, gender, ethnicity, caring responsibilities, health status and so on).

Key Finding 1:

Socio-demographic factors shape clear inequalities, and food security is under threat

“Things are very, very stressful. I have a toddler who is very picky. He’s very clingy so I can only cook once he’s asleep.

A husband who has intolerances and although he does like to help with cooking, he creates more work for me.

I know what I want to do but I can’t put it into practice. I stand at the kitchen sink and eat my food. I haven’t exercised in 2 years. I’m working, looking after a baby, cleaning the house and cooking.

I barely get any sleep.”

FEMALE, 29, AB, ASIAN BRITISH, URBAN, YOUNG CHILD

Key Finding 1:

Socio-demographic factors shape clear inequalities, and food security is under threat

5% of people in the survey in Scotland experienced 'hard' food insecurity

- That is, they experienced at least three of the following in relation to food in the past 12 months: unable to buy food, unable to afford to eat balanced meals, cut meal size/eaten less, skipped meals, been hungry or, obtained food from a food bank

Most people are making food compromises; many are living with some measure of food insecurity.

- Only 35% of people in Scotland did not make any compromises to save money (i.e. are fully food secure when including the 'softer' measure of insecurity - this is in line with UK overall). Compromises include: reduced the quantity of fresh food, bought cheaper food that compromised on animal rights, environmental standards or worker treatment, swapped branded items for cheaper alternatives, cooked from scratch something they used to buy ready-made, couldn't afford to buy locally produced foods despite wanting to, bulked out meals with cheaper ingredients or, other (unspecified).

As in the rest of the UK, pressures are felt more deeply, and with more negative impact, amongst the following groups:

- Lower income; Women; Parents; Ethnic minorities; People with chronic health issues; Gen Z/ Millennials (aged 18-40).

For further details about measuring food insecurity, see Appendix: Measuring Food Insecurity, p. 40

Key Finding 1:

Socio-demographic factors share clear inequalities, and food security is under threat

"I just don't think it's fair. You know, you look for quality at good price but they don't to go hand in hand."

MALE, 19, C2, WHITE, URBAN

"I'm quite comfortable now but there has been times in the past where it's been really difficult, where I couldn't afford an online shop. The reason being that you need to have a minimum spend, and I didn't have that in my bank account, but at the same time I needed those deliveries."

FEMALE, 38, B, WHITE, URBAN, MULTIPLE CHRONIC HEALTH ISSUES

"It's frustrating. When you are shopping for food, how do you win? It's not a win-win. You've got prices of everything from food to energy prices - everything's going up."

FEMALE, 36, C2, WHITE, RURAL, CHILDREN 5-8

Priority Space A:

Equitable Access to Safe, Healthy, Affordable Food

Action by FSS, on its own or working with partners, needs to take into account the public need for a fairer food system.

Key Finding 2:

People want everyone to have access to safe, healthy, affordable food but they worry about the future and aren't sure anyone can change anything...

Key Finding 2:

People want everyone to have access to safe, healthy, affordable foods.

But they worry about the future, and aren't sure anyone can change anything...

"I'd really like to think that in five years time, everybody, regardless of background and economic status will be in a position to feed their family. That's the very basics of human society. I'd like to think that means, in real terms, you know, not only being able to buy pasta and having the same meal five out of seven nights, and the odd treat here and there. I mean actual good quality food that's affordable and convenient and people don't feel like they're begging simply to get access to it."

MALE, 34, AB, WHITE, SUBURBAN, KIDS 8-15

Key Finding 2:

People want everyone to have access to safe, healthy, affordable food.

But they worry about the future, and aren't sure anyone can change anything...

Rising food prices are an issue of deep public concern and worry.

- 1 in 5 survey respondents in Scotland spontaneously mentioned food prices as an area of future concern (in line with England, Wales and Northern Ireland (EWNI)).
- A higher proportion of respondents in Scotland worry over food poverty and inequality becoming an issue in the future – 68% compared to 63% EWNI*.
- Concern over food price, cost of healthy food and food poverty or inequality is higher amongst more pressured and/or marginalised groups such as those with long-term health conditions, women and those who are less food secure.

Table 1: Concerns about food expressed in Scotland, by group

Future food concerns	Total Scotland	Long-term health conditions	Women	Less food secure ²	Minority Ethnic
The price of food	76%	78%	81%	90%	76%
The cost of healthy food	70%	73%	77%	87%	77%
Food poverty or inequality	68%	70%	73%	85%	74%

² Those who have very low or low food security

Recent media coverage around inequalities in food access seemed influential in shaping people's views, with the 'Free School Meals' campaign led by Marcus Rashford and partners (e.g. the Food Foundation) being particularly powerful. The idea of children going hungry during a public health crisis (Covid 19) and being supplied with 'sub-par' meals proved highly evocative.

Key Finding 2:

People want everyone to have access to safe, healthy, affordable food.

But they worry about the future, and aren't sure anyone can change anything...

"I found it quite frustrating because the generalised advice that's out there is all about a balanced diet.

And a lot of people have that stuck in their head that they need to be having this amount of dairy, etc. And I tried to do that with dairy-free foods and it is so expensive.

But I've had to learn where to top up on calcium from other sources and I realised it was a lot easier than what it seemed."

FEMALE, 38, B, WHITE, URBAN,
MULTIPLE CHRONIC HEALTH ISSUES

"I wish there was a level of protection there where it's more affordable for everybody to access healthy food. When they're always going on about obesity and poor health and diet, but nothing's ever really done to actually to help with the cost of that."

MALE, 58, C2, WHITE, SUBURBAN, LIVES ALONE

"It's just all about the trade off. Sometimes the bank account wins."

FEMALE, 40, C2, BLACK BRITISH, SUBURBAN, CHILDREN
12-18

"Unfortunately, there's an awful lot of people that are running 100 miles an hour. And they don't have the time to stop and check all these things like ingredients and health or environment or whatever. They just pick things up."

FEMALE, 63, B, WHITE, URBAN, GROWN CHILDREN

Priority Space B:

Food Hygiene and Safety

The public's trust in standards is high today, but not equally for everyone, and the landscape is changing, driving concerns for the future.

Key Finding 3: Trust in safety and hygiene is high. But it's lower for people on lower income/less food secure

Key Finding 4: People worry over whether high standards will be maintained in the future. The implications of new trade deals after Brexit drive higher concerns in Scotland.

Key Finding 5: The public also see processed food and animal welfare as safety concerns - if standards are not maintained and monitored, these issues present a risk to safety and health.

Key Finding 6: Allergens labelling and management represent a substantial concern area.

Key finding 3:

Trust in safety and hygiene is high.

But it's lower for people who are on lower income/less food secure.

“With food and hygiene - you need to be open and transparent about how they're prepared, where this came from, all that stuff, so people do feel more comfortable... From what I see things are working ok.”

MALE, 58, C2, WHITE, SUBURBAN, LIVES ALONE

Key finding 3:

Trust in safety and hygiene is high.

But it's lower for people who are on lower income/less food secure.

Trust in current safety and hygiene standards is high and even higher in Scotland compared to EWNI.

- Most survey respondents in Scotland trust that the foods sold in shops are made and stored according to good food safety standards (81% compared to 79% in EWNI*).
- Most also trust that the places they eat or buy from are handling food safely and hygienically (80% compared to 77% in ENWI)*.

However, there was some concern and a sense of risk from lower-income participants regarding safety and hygiene.

- These participants seemed to feel more exposed to 'poor quality' and 'poor practice' and had more concerns relating to allergies. There was concern about the safety and long-term health impacts of 'cheap foods'. This group also reported taking more risks/having less 'room for error' because of money-saving practices such as buying and freezing food on the day of the 'use by' date. They also felt more concerned that allergen labelling on food packs is unclear.
- Among those with "very low" or "low" food security: 74% trust that the places they eat or buy from are handling food safely and hygienically – versus 82%* among those who are more food secure.

Key finding 4:

People worry over whether high standards will be maintained in the future.

The implications of new trade deals after Brexit drive higher concerns in Scotland.

“[I worry about] the availability of some foods due to supply chain issues. We [in the UK] don't grow as much of our own anymore, so there is an extra concern about the 'carbon footprint' of our food. The meat/dairy industry is a concern regarding welfare and environment”

MALE, C1/C2, NO CHILDREN

Key finding 4:

People worry over whether high standards will be maintained in the future.

The implications of new trade deals after Brexit drive higher concerns in Scotland.

A majority of the survey respondents in Scotland are concerned about whether food standards will be maintained in future (post-Brexit) – and concern levels are higher in Scotland than EWNI.

- 'Food standards post-Brexit' are cited as a major concern for 58% in Scotland (higher than in EWNI 50%*).
- 'Food shortages' also drive higher level of concerns in Scotland (57%) compared with EWNI (51%*).
- In the qualitative research, concerns and references to “hormone pumped chickens” and dairy products of “dubious origins” were common.

Key finding 5:

The public also see processed food and animal welfare as safety concerns – if standards are not maintained and monitored, these issues present a risk to safety and health.

“Every farm is inspected at some time or another for the animal welfare, but how far does it go? How far can they go?”

FEMALE, 36, C2, WHITE, RURAL, KIDS 5-8

Key finding 5:

The public also see processed food and animal welfare as safety concerns – if standards are not maintained and monitored, these issues present a risk to safety and health.

Many people want action on wider ‘safety issues’ linked to processed food and animal welfare.

- Participants in the Scotland qualitative research worry about the long-term safety of things ‘added to’ the food they eat, and/or highly processed foods.
- Findings suggest the public in Scotland is worried about ‘over-processing’, but they are less likely to associate this with regulatory intervention at present. A higher proportion of survey respondents in Scotland (64%) express concerns about the ‘over-processing’ of food (compared to 61% in EWNI*).
- However, a lower proportion in Scotland (43%) state they would like to see regulatory action in order to ‘reduce things added in the food process e.g. E-numbers, preservatives’ (lower than in EWNI at 47%*).

62% of people see treatment of animals in the food chain as a major concern (in line with EWNI).

Some people tended to see the treatment of animals as linked to food safety and health, that high animal welfare standards ‘must be’ related to good safety standards and ‘must somehow’ impact human health.

Key finding 6:

Allergens labelling and management represent a substantial concern area.

"It is virtually impossible to get a clear picture of what is allowed to be labelled as food - so many additives and fillers which cannot be described as food are allowed."

FEMALE, 52, C1, WHITE, URBAN, OLDER CHILDREN

Key finding 6:

Allergens labelling and management represent a substantial concern area.

Allergens emerged as a clear area of concern

- A slightly higher proportion of respondents in Scotland self report as having a food allergy or intolerance - 11% compared to 9% in EWNI.
- 38% of consumers in Scotland are 'concerned that the way allergens are labelled on food packs is unclear' (in line with EWNI).
- 'Enforcing clearer labelling of food ingredients and allergens' was cited by 44% of respondents in Scotland as a priority action area for the food regulator (in line with EWNI).
- Precautionary Allergen Labelling (PAL) in particular felt unclear for people in the qualitative research.
- In the qualitative research, there was more urgency around allergens from people with health issues and/or those who had more pressured food lives (less time; less money; and or more demands to meet simultaneously for example due to dietary restrictions).

Priority Space B:

Food Hygiene and Safety

The public's trust in standards is high today, but not equally for everyone, and the landscape is changing, driving concerns for the future.

"I've had bad experiences with some farmers markets and small stores where they aren't storing the food properly. It's easier to trust supermarkets in keeping food safely and hygienically, but I don't want to shop there."

FEMALE, 63, B, WHITE, SUBURBAN

"I say one thing that worries me about food is the hygiene of food. I'm a really, really big germaphobe. If I don't know where some things come from - new things for instance - I always kind of stick to what I know. If I was to go into a shop and buy a packet of chicken, I'd always stick to what I know but if somebody was to buy something that I've never used before, I probably wouldn't use it. Just because I don't know where it came from or anything like that."

MALE, 19, C2, ASIAN BRITISH, URBAN

"See if you're eating stuff from another country the safety rules go out the window, and nobody has really inspected or regulated [it]."

MALE, 58, C2, WHITE, SUBURBAN

"I remember when growing up I'd ask my mum why don't you check ingredients or question certain labels. She would say 'We are in the best country in the world. This government is honest and they look after us. We don't have to worry because they worry for us and look after us more than we do ourselves. If there is something wrong they will take it away and let us know.' She had blind faith and trust. I wish we could have that carefree approach."

FEMALE, 29, AB, ASIAN BRITISH, URBAN, YOUNG CHILD

Priority Space C:

Health and Nutrition Choices

This is a big topic across the UK, but even more so in Scotland where people face more challenges to achieving the healthy diet to which they aspire


Key Finding 7: People want it to be easier to access and choose healthy, nutritious food. This relates to the choices available, food marketing, food labelling and information and guidance.

Key Finding 8: There are additional barriers for people with serious health issues or allergies, disabled and neuro-divergent people and more urgency in these groups around eating well.

Key finding 7:

People want it to be easier to access and choose healthy, nutritious food.

This relates to choices available, food marketing, food labelling and information and guidance.



"I also sometimes look at my weekly shop, and I'm like, I need to cut stuff out here, it's too much, so maybe I cut some of the treats. I do feel like sometimes I just have to compromise on the free range and organic because it's not on the shelves that day. I just go for the normal stuff, and I just accept it really."

FEMALE, 52, C1, WHITE, URBAN

Key finding 7:

People want it to be easier to access and choose healthy, nutritious food.

This relates to choices available, food marketing, food labelling and information and guidance.

Many people feel that the system is ‘stacked against’ healthy eating – with a more pronounced skew in Scotland.

- Most people feel that they know what 'a healthy nutritious diet is' although this is lower in Scotland (67% compared to 71% in EWNI*).
- Over half of consumers in Scotland (58%) think supermarkets encourage consumers to buy unhealthy food (higher than 54% in EWNI*).
- 1 in 4 (27%) feel heavily processed foods are often the only option available to them – aligned to EWNI (25%) – but fewer people in Scotland find it easy to eat several portions of fruit and vegetables a day (55% compared to 59% in EWNI*) and more worry that their diet lacks variety (higher in Scotland with 44% compared to 39% EWNI*).

Many want clear, ‘honest’ health information.

- Many people (63%) often feel that foods labelled as 'healthier options' are unhealthy in other ways, in line with EWNI.
- Just under half of respondents want FSS to ensure that food labelled as ‘healthy’ is genuinely a healthier option (49%), in line with EWNI.
- 40% want the regulator to provide clear guidance on how to make healthy choices on a budget – compared to 36% in EWNI*.
- More people in Scotland want action around ensuring healthy nutrition for children (43% compared to 39% in EWNI*) and healthy meals in public sector settings (45% compared to 40% in EWNI*).

Key finding 8:

Additional barriers for people with serious health issues and allergies, disabled and neuro-divergent people.

And more urgency in these groups around eating well.

“I used to be the sort of person for whom food was all about enjoyment and I wouldn’t question really what I was putting in my body but then I started feeling unwell. It’s more about nutrition now and about what feels comfortable and doesn’t flare up my condition. Because of my esophageal condition, I need softer foods, like mash or soup. I try to batch-cook on days I am well, but that takes a toll on me.”

FEMALE, 38, B, WHITE, URBAN, MULTIPLE CHRONIC HEALTH ISSUES

Key finding 8:

Additional barriers for people with serious health issues and allergies, disabled and neuro-divergent people.

And more urgency in these groups around eating well.

Some health conditions are more prevalent in Scotland.

- 31% of survey respondents in Scotland describe themselves as ‘overweight’ (which is higher than in EWNI at 27%*).
- A slightly higher proportion of people in Scotland (11%) say they have a food allergy or intolerance (compared to EWNI at 9%*).
- 19% say the food they buy is often influenced by their mental wellbeing or mental health needs (slightly higher than EWNI at 15%*).

People with health issues that impacted their food choices often experienced amplified price pressure, cognitive strain and challenges around navigating food information. For example, people experienced:

- Higher cost of ergonomic utensils.
- Higher cost of pre-chopped packaged foods.
- Higher cost of speciality and free-from foods.
- Shopping costs such as transport, car fuel, minimum spend of £40 for deliveries, food delivery costs.
- Not being able to shop around for more affordable options because of limited energy, cognitive or sensory overload, brain fog, and so on.
- (For many) limited income and more price pressure in terms of money spent on health/supplements/etc.

Priority Space C:

Health and Nutrition Choices

This is a big topic for the UK, but even more so in Scotland where people face more challenges to achieving the healthy diet to which they aspire

"I try to purchase products which are on offer or multi-buy deals. This allows me to buy higher quality food for a lower price ... This is how I wish things would change - deals and offers were on more healthy foods than junk foods."

– FEMALE, 36, C2, WHITE, RURAL

"[I get frustrated at] the companies that are allowed to promote the fact that [products] are healthier than the previous version. When they're grossly manipulating what would be classed as healthy"

MALE, 34, AB, WHITE, SUBURBAN, KIDS
8-15

"It does sound pathetic to someone who is quite healthy, but sometimes even the motion of mashing through it in a pot, my arms get quite weak at times."

– FEMALE, 38, B, WHITE, URBAN, MULTIPLE CHRONIC HEALTH ISSUES

"It would be good if there was guidance that says we are all unique and discuss all the ways you can approach your food - anti-inflammatory, organic only, etc"

– FEMALE, 20, D, WHITE, SUBURBAN
FOOD INTOLERANCES

Priority Space D:

Environment and Ethics

Consumers want government, the food industry and food regulators to work together towards a more sustainable system, even if they can't prioritise it themselves.

Key Finding 9: People care about wider environment and ethics issues but they don't feel they can make a difference - so they want help from those with power.

Key Finding 10: Waste is a flashpoint issue - both packaging waste and food waste.

Key finding 11: There was high interest in supporting local systems and British farming, and 'high standard' food systems that respect all involved.

Key finding 9:

People care about wider environment and ethics issues...

But they don't feel they can make a difference – so want help from those with power.

“Maybe it’s the age I’m at. We weren’t brought up with this sort of thing. It was all about getting food on the table, good quality food. ‘Issues’ were less of a priority.”

MALE, 58, C2, WHITE, SUBURBAN, LIVES ALONE

Key finding 9:

People care about wider environment and ethics issues...

But they don't feel they can make a difference – so want help from those with power.

Climate change and environment are key concerns.

- Many of the survey respondents in the Scotland survey worry about the environmental impact of our food system (66% compared to 60% in EWNI*).
- People in Scotland cite the impact of climate change on food production as a major concern for the next 3 years (61% compared to 58% in EWNI). Some groups are particularly worried – especially younger people aged 18-40.
- In Scotland, 55% claim to 'pay close attention to the environmental or ethical impact of the products [they] buy' (higher than 51% in EWNI*).
- Over half of people in Scotland say they are 'prepared to pay more for food products that are environmentally-friendly or have high welfare standards' (51% compared to 46% in EWNI*).

However these concerns don't always translate into day-to-day decision making / behaviour.

- Consumers see it as expensive to eat in a sustainable way, something only few can consistently afford.
- Less than half of respondents (44%) find on-pack information about a product's environmental impact easy to understand (in line with EWNI).
- Only 41% find on-pack information about animal welfare easy to understand (in line with EWNI).

Key finding 10:

Waste is a flashpoint issue – both packaging waste and food waste.

“We have songs like Old MacDonald and you know, our kids play with farm toys and things like that. We're conditioned from a young age to think farming's this cute and cuddly thing that it isn't. Agriculture is one of the biggest contributors to climate change in the world. But, you know, we're too busy talking about McDonald's plastic straws, which accounted for 0.01% of the plastic waste in the oceans.”

MALE, 34, AB, WHITE, SUBURBAN, KIDS 8-15

Key finding 10:

Waste is a flashpoint issue – both packaging waste and food waste.

Food waste and packaging waste are tangible symptoms of larger tensions and concerns.

- Most survey respondents in Scotland find it unacceptable to throw food away at home (75%, although this is slightly lower than in EWNI at 79%*).
- Most people (68%) try to reduce or avoid food products that create plastic waste (in line with findings from EWNI).
- A lot of people 65% worry about food waste in the food chain (65%) and about packaging waste in the food chain (66%)(both in line with EWNI).

In the qualitative research, waste was often tied to discussions around food poverty, price, environment.

- There was a lot of discussion around corporate waste.
- Some thought that food waste is a sign that the system as a whole isn't working as it should be, and isn't prioritising people or planet.

Key finding 11:

High interest in supporting local food systems, British farming and 'high standard' food systems that respects all.

There are heightened concerns in Scotland over how Brexit will impact on these issues.

"I needed some green veg to go with my dinner and tender stem broccoli was £2, it's normally £1.50! I've noticed some products disappear from the shelves but I find alternatives. The only thing I'm missing out on is crab, which is incredible considering it's local to me... I know which fishing boat it comes off, and I see that fishing boat in the harbour all the time and I'm thinking...where is the crab?!"

MALE, 58, C2, WHITE, SUBURBAN, LIVES ALONE

Key finding 11:

High interest in supporting local food systems, British farming and 'high standard' food system that respects all.

There are heightened concerns in Scotland over how Brexit will impact these issues.

There is a big emphasis among consumers on local production and a desire to move to 'more local' food systems, but these must be affordable.

- 63% of respondents in the Scotland survey trust local food producers to have higher quality standards than big business (versus 58% EWNI*).
- 52% say they actively try to buy from local food producers (higher than in EWNI at 46%*).
- There is a belief that local and UK food standards are high.

There is a strong interest in supporting British farming post-Brexit and these concerns are more prevalent in Scotland.

- 62% of people in the survey of Scotland worry about the future of British farming - 61% are concerned over UK dependency on imports (versus 58% ENWI*), and 57% worry about food shortages in future (versus 51% ENWI*).
- Concerns are linked to beliefs around: potential for self-sufficiency in food; big love for "farmers in fields" who must be protected; desire to support local economies.
- Many want Brexit to lead to stronger standards: 56% want the regulator to work with partners to ensure 'high standards of animal welfare, including for imported foods'; 48% cite 'ensure fair treatment for workers, farmers and small producers in the food chain' as an area for action from the food regulator (both in line with EWNI).

Priority Space D:

Environment and Ethics

Consumers want government, the food industry and the food regulators to work together towards a more sustainable system, even if they can't prioritise it themselves

"So, agriculture is one of the biggest businesses in Britain. You know, they'll tell you [to] have half a bath, have your shower for six minutes, only have one cup of coffee in the morning, save the world, but, you know, they're out there creating more. So I think the climate change aspects and things like that is like, we can't really do anything until the regulations and things change, no amount of effort on our part is going to fix anything until these kinds of changes need to work from the top down.

MALE, 34, AB, WHITE, SUBURBAN, KIDS 8-15

"I'm just not prepared to eat food that is full of pesticides. I don't want to give it to my children. I don't want it myself."

FEMALE, 35, C1, WHITE, URBAN

"We need to get information for starters, what are the regulations? Are they in black and white? Can we go and check them? I don't think the government take enough interest in human life"

MALE, 60, B, WHITE, RURAL

"I grew up in the countryside - my grandparents had a traditional mixed farm and used no chemicals to grow their crops and did not feed rubbish to their animals and stuff them in little pens in order to fit as many in as possible. Almost all their food was grown, reared, foraged and made on the farm and would be top organic quality - they just didn't call it that at that time. My grandparents ethos has stayed with me and for me it is super important that the food we eat is good for us (with as little pesticide/herbicide/insecticide residue as possible), does not damage the environment, does not cause suffering to other humans or animals, and is not flown in from the other side of the earth."

- FEMALE, 36, C2, WHITE, RURAL

Appendix A: Glossary

FSS	Food Standards Scotland
FSA	Food Standards Agency
EWNI	England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Quotations

For confidentiality and data protection reasons, all quotations from participants are anonymised. However, some information about people’s circumstances are included for context. Some of the following variables included are:

Identified Gender	Male/Female
Age	
Social Class	A Higher managerial, administrative and professional B Intermediate managerial, administrative and professional C1 Supervisory, clerical and junior management, administrative and professional C2 Skilled manual workers D Semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers E State pensioners, casual/lowest grade workers, unemployed with state benefits
Ethnicity	White, Asian British
Geography	Urban, rural, suburban
Family	Grown children, older children, young children, lives alone, no children
Health Conditions	Multiple chronic health conditions, food intolerances, allergies



Appendix B: Measuring Food Insecurity

Measuring Food Insecurity for ‘Interests, needs and concerns around food report: the public’s view in Scotland’

This research wanted to capture a broad range of behaviours around food used by consumers in response to financial pressures. Building on an existing measure of food insecurity (USDA model), the research used a traditional ‘hard’ measure of insecurity and also developed ‘softer’ measures to include behaviours such as bulking out meals with cheap ingredients or trading down from brands for price reasons. Full details of food insecurity measures are available in the FSA/FSS UK Technical Report available at: [UK Public’s Interests, Needs and Concerns Around Food | Food Standards Agency](#)

Other Measures of Food Insecurity in Scotland

The measure used here differs from other measures of food insecurity used in Scotland such as the Scottish Health Survey (SHeS) and the Family Resources Survey (FRS). Based on data from 2020, the SHeS found 8% of individuals experienced food insecurity and FRS that 8% of households experienced food insecurity. These differ from the rates of food insecurity measured in the current research due to differences in how food insecurity is measured and calculated. There are also differences in the timescales when the measurement was carried out (the current research is based on data from January 2022).

The SHeS (Scottish Health Survey) asks 3 yes/no questions of individual respondents: ‘During the past 12 months, was there a time when: You were worried you would run out of food because of a lack of money or other resources? You ate less than you thought you should because of a lack of money or other resources? Your household ran out of food because of lack of money or other resources?’ The SHeS measure of food insecurity is used as an indicator for the poverty and human rights outcomes in Scotland’s National Performance Framework.

The FRS (Family Resources Survey) also measures food security at UK level with breakdowns available for each constituent nation. The FRS asks 8 questions, based on the Adult Food Security Survey Module, from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). Respondents are asked whether, and how often, they were worried about running out of food, had to reduce meal sizes, skip meals and/or other behaviours with reference to the last 30 days. From the questions, a ten-point household score is generated. One point is scored for each ‘positive’ answer, that is, answers of “Often true”, “Sometimes true” and “Yes”. A score of: 0 = high food security; 1 or 2 = marginal food security; 3 to 5 = low food security; 6 to 10 = very low food security.