

FSA Campaign Tracker

Executive Summary

The Food Standards Agency (FSA or Agency) monitors marketing campaign activity using Kantar Public's online omnibus survey¹. The latest survey was conducted amongst an online panel in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and was completed by 2706 adults aged 16+ between the 21st and 27th February 2017. The sample has been weighted to represent the adult population of England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

As well as looking at general perceptions and awareness about food safety, the survey also looks at the reach and recall of our campaigns. We monitor campaign key performance indicators (KPIs) around awareness, concern, and propensity to share information and reported behaviour change over time.

As well as general food poisoning, the areas of focus for the Food Standards Agency are as follows;

Campylobacter Food Poisoning

Campylobacter is a type of food poisoning most often found in poultry. We monitor prompted awareness of campylobacter and the percentage of consumers more concerned about this type of food poisoning in particular. Furthermore, we look to track the consumer view as to whether industry should do more about the issue of campylobacter.

Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS)

Our Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) helps to choose where to eat out or shop for food by giving you information via a rating about the hygiene standards in restaurants, pubs, cafés, takeaways, hotels and other places to eat, as well as supermarkets and other food shops. Currently, food businesses in England and Scotland are not obliged to display their sticker as opposed to Wales where it was made mandatory in November 2013 and in Northern Ireland in 2016. We track awareness of the scheme, use of the scheme within the last 12 months and propensity to use it in the next 12 months. Additionally, we monitor the proportion of consumers who have looked for the sticker when eating out – either inside or outside the premises.

Allergens

Awareness and confidence in the new legislation on how food businesses display information about allergens is also monitored, which was introduced in December 2014. This equips consumers with specific knowledge about the allergens in food they are buying and or consuming. We also monitor consumer confidence in asking for allergen information when eating out. In Waves 1 and 2 of the Campaign Tracker we looked at comparing the omnibus results with Allergy UK members (see Annex A) to get a fair representation of the population who have allergies which relates to around 2% of people.

¹ TNS Rebrand to Kantar Public – omnibus methodology remains the same
<http://www.tnsglobal.com/press-release/kantar-unveils-new-corporate-identity-across-its-operating-brands>

Our Food Future

We also look at consumers' views on the future of our food system. Several questions were introduced to the questionnaire in November 2015 and this area is now included within the KPIs we look to monitor over time. We track if consumers feel they have access to an affordable, healthy diet and if enough information is available to them about what is in their food and where it comes from.

Food Fraud

To mitigate food crime threats to consumers, the National Food Crime Unit was established within the FSA in 2015. They work with partners to protect consumers from food and drink that is either unsafe or not authentic because of serious criminal activity. We track the consumer views around the authenticity of food and the effectiveness of the authorities at preventing food fraud. This section was introduced in March 2016.

Food Waste

Initially this section was introduced in 2016 to provide a baseline before Food Safety Week. Post-campaign this is still monitored to identify changes in consumer views on food waste over time. We explore understanding of use-by and best-before dates, and understanding of when food is safe to freeze. We also explore views on using the freezer as an effective and safe way of extending the life of food and reducing food waste at home.

Key Findings

General Food Poisoning

The food poisoning types most heard of were Salmonella (91%, down 1% since June 2016), E-coli (89%, unchanged since Nov 2015) and Norovirus (66%, up 3% since June 2016). 31% of respondents were aware of Campylobacter, when prompted, as a source of food poisoning, compared to 30% in June 2016.

84% of people cited raw chicken or turkey as the most likely food to get food poisoning from. This was followed by Shellfish (62%), Reheated takeaway food (52%) and Eggs (43%).

Cooking food thoroughly (83%), hand washing (78%) and preparing different types of foods on different types of chopping boards (73%) are noted as the best ways to avoid food poisoning.

Campylobacter Food Poisoning

29% of people claimed to have recently seen, heard or read publicity helping them to avoid food poisoning from Campylobacter or chicken, whilst 64% did not recall publicity. Of those who could recall publicity about avoiding food poisoning from Campylobacter, 78% said they would buy chicken just as they always had compared to 75% who had not seen any publicity.

Concern about campylobacter is 38%, up 3% since June 2016. Just over half (56%) of all respondents wanted to know more about how to avoid food poisoning from chicken, up 2% since June 2016. The proportion of consumers stating they will share information about avoiding campylobacter has increased by 2% to 49% from June 2016

58% of respondents thought industry should do more about campylobacter, back to the same level as March 2016.

Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS)

There was a slight increase (1%) in prompted awareness of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme since June 2016 to 74%. 48% of participants said they had used the FHRS scheme in the last 12 months to check a food establishment's hygiene standards before deciding to visit, up 6% since June 2016.. Almost two thirds (64%) stated they will likely use the FHRS to check food hygiene ratings in the next 12 months (+4% since June last year).

We also wanted to learn how respondents were checking the rating of the premises they visited. 81% reported that the method used to check the rating was by either checking for a sticker or certificate in the window/door of the establishment or by entering inside the premises and 24% accessed the food.gov.uk/ratings website to find out this information. The percentage of respondents who believe it should be mandatory for FHRS to be displayed was 86% (+2% since June last year).

Allergens

The new EU Food Information for Consumers Regulation was introduced in December 2014. This means that any of the 14 main allergens that are on the regulatory lists are to be emphasised on food labels and information about allergenic ingredients are to be located in a single place. 9% of respondents knew about the changes in rules regarding allergens (-1% since June 2016).

10% of respondents claimed they had seen, heard or read publicity activity regarding Allergens (-2% since June 2016).

Overall confidence in asking staff members for information about ingredients in food they were selling because of a concern about possible allergies or intolerances is 42%, up 15% since June 2016. Confidence to ask for allergen information was slightly higher in those who

said they had seen publicity (45% confidence level in those who could recall activity, 42% for those who could not recall activity). Over half of all respondents would be confident enough to ask staff for allergen information in a coffee shop, café, sandwich place and restaurant. Confidence to ask for allergy information in a takeaway place was lower than for all other premises, 47% would be confident enough and 25% would not.

Our Food Future

65% of respondents feel that they have enough information about what is in their food, up 1% since June 2016. 58% feel they have adequate information about where their food comes from and 78% of respondents feel empowered to make decisions about what they eat and why they eat it. Over two thirds (70%) feel that they have access to an affordable, healthy diet and 65% think this accessibility will continue into the future. 64% are conscious of the wider impact of the food choices they make.

Food Fraud

Over half of respondents (59%) feel that food is what it says it is and has accurate labelling. 43% think the authorities are effectively preventing and detecting food fraud (-2% since June 2016) and 57% trust the authenticity of the food they buy and eat.

Food Waste

60% of participants believe that eating food by the use-by date helps to avoid food poisoning, and 33% feel that eating food by the best-before date reduced chances of getting ill. Over half (56%) believe it is dangerous to freeze food after it has been cooked and 56% feel food has to be frozen on the day of purchase for it to be safe to eat. 63% claim they will use their freezer more to avoid food waste. Almost two thirds (63%) believe use-by date is the best indicator of when food is safe to eat.

Annex A – Our KPIs

Campylobacter

* This figure is of the 938 people/ 35% aware of campylobacter

Overall Campaign Performance Indicators	W1 May 14	W2 Jun 14	W3 Nov 14	W4 May 15	W5 Sept 15	W6 Nov 15	W7 Mar 16	W8 Jun 16	W9 Feb 17
Prompted awareness of Campylobacter as a source of food poisoning	19%	20%	23%	35%	33%	30%	31%	30%	31%
More concerned about campylobacter in particular	29%	19%	39%	29%*	37%	39%	35%	35%	38%
Prep & cook chicken just as I have always done/ Buy chicken just as I have always done	68%	70%	77%	74%*	77%	76%	74%	74%	75%
Shared info on not washing raw chicken / how to avoid campylobacter	61%	48%	59%	52%*	49%	51%	46%	47%	49%
Industry should do more about campylobacter	-	-	-	-	-	59%	58%	57%	58%

Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS)

Overall Campaign Performance Indicators	W1 Feb 14	W2 Nov 14	W3 Dec 14	W4 Feb 15	W5 May 15	W6 Sept 15	W7 Nov 15	W8 Mar 16	W9 Jun 16	W10 Feb 17
Awareness of rating scheme	37%	51%	53%	55%	63%	71%	71%	72%	73%	74%
Have checked rating scheme	41%	38%	42%	43%	37%	39%	39%	41%	42%	48%
Shared information on rating scheme	51%	46%	45%	48%	44%	40%	42%	40%	39%	41%
Likely to use FHRS in the future	-	61%	61%	67%	60%	62%	62%	60%	60%	64%
In favour of mandatory display	-	-	88%	93%	85%	85%	85%	85%	84%	86%
Looked for the sticker inside/outside premises	-	-	-	-	-	80%	82%	82%	82%	81%

Annex A – Our KPIs

Allergens											
*Confidence in all venues OB – Omnibus											
Overall Campaign Performance Indicators	W1 May 14		W2 Jun 14		W3 Mar 15	W4 May 15	W5 Sept 15	W6 Nov 15	W7 Mar 16	W8 Jun 16	W9 Feb 17
	OB	Allergy UK	OB	Allergy UK	OB	OB	OB	OB	OB	OB	OB
Awareness of new rules about allergens	9%	47%	15%	74%	29%	7%	8%	10%	8%	10%	9%
Confidence to ask staff members for information regarding ingredients in food they are selling (NET)	-	59%	-	63%	-	36%*	38%*	39%	38%	27%	42%

Our Food Future				
Overall Campaign Performance Indicators	W1 Nov 15	W2 Mar 16	W3 Jun 16	W4 Feb 17
Enough info about what is in my food	66%	63%	64%	65%
Enough info about where my food comes from	57%	57%	57%	58%
Empowered to make decisions about what I eat and why	81%	78%	79%	78%

Annex A – Our KPI's

Food Fraud			
Overall Performance Indicators	W1 Mar 16	W2 Jun 16	W3 Feb 17
Food is what it says it is and is accurately labelled	57%	59%	59%
The authorities are effectively preventing & detective food fraud	44%	45%	43%
I trust the authenticity of the food I buy & eat	56%	56%	57%

Food Waste			
Overall Performance Indicators	W1 Jun 16	W2 Jul 16	W3 Feb 17
Eating food by the use-by-date helps to avoid food poisoning	57%	63%	60%
Eating food by the best before date helps to avoid food poisoning	30%	33%	33%
It is dangerous to re-freeze meat after it has been cooked	59%	55%	56%
Food has to be frozen on the day of purchase for it to be safe to eat	59%	51%	56%
Use-by date is the best indicator of when food it safe to eat	65%	66%	63%
I will use my freezer more often to avoid food waste	59%	65%	63%