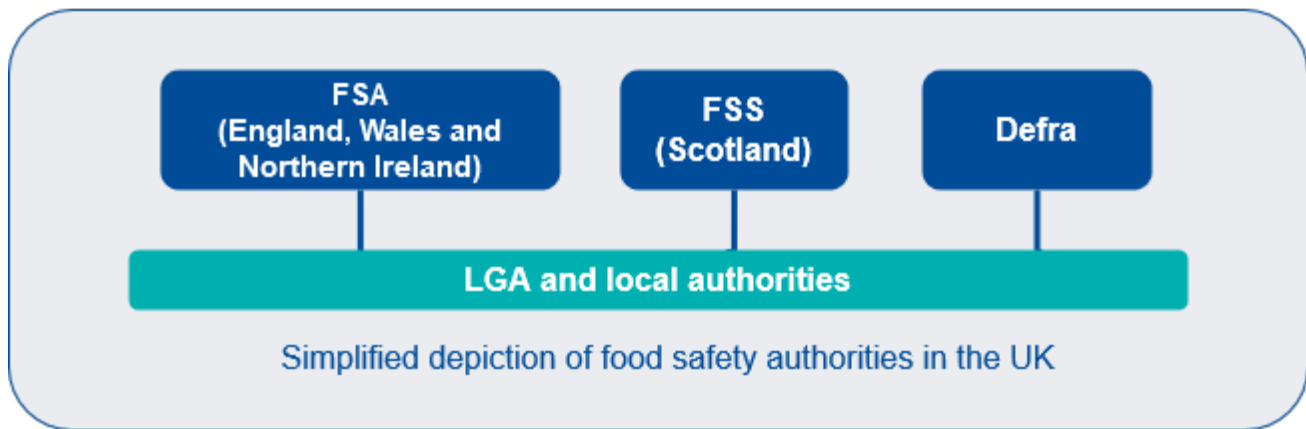


# United Kingdom

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The Food Safety Act of 1990 provides the legislative framework for food law in Great Britain. The UK retained harmonised EU food law UK when it exited the EU; this legislation has since been assimilated into UK law and provides the main body of food law, along with the domestic implementing instruments that were also assimilated. Assimilated Regulation (EC) No. 178/2002, assimilated Regulation (EU) 852/2004 and assimilated Regulation 853/2004 are important regulations that deal with food safety and hygiene. The Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 provide for executing powers enforcement of these regulations and some specific national requirements. Parallel legislation applies in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Food and feed safety and standards are devolved matters in the UK with separate regulations in Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, with the respective food safety authorities providing advice to Ministers with a shared aim. Infringement of food regulations can lead to measures under criminal law and consumer damage claims under civil law, whereby the final decision rests with the courts. Government measures regarding food safety are often based on scientific risk assessment. However, the final decision on the legality of governmental measures rests with the courts.

Risk assessment, communication, and management are not institutionally separated in the UK. Risk assessments are published on the Internet unless statutory provisions prohibit this.

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## Food Standards Agency

<b>Name</b>	Food Standards Agency (England, Wales and Northern Ireland)
<b>Acronym</b>	FSA
<b>Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk assessment</li> <li>• Risk communication</li> <li>• Risk management</li> <li>• INFOSAN Contact Point for food incidents</li> <li>• Research</li> </ul>
<b>Responsibilities</b>	
<b>Locations</b>	Central office in London; other offices in York, Wales (Cardiff), and Northern Ireland (Belfast)
<b>URL</b>	<a href="https://www.food.gov.uk/">https://www.food.gov.uk/</a>

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is the central authority in the field of food safety in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. It is an independent non-ministerial Government Department governed by an independent Chair and non-executive Board responsible for the overall strategic direction of the organisation and for ensuring it meets its legal obligations. The FSA is accountable to the UK Parliament in Westminster, the Northern Ireland Assembly, and the Welsh Parliament through Health Ministers.

The FSA's main objectives in law are to protect public health from risks arising from the consumption of food and generally to protect the interests of consumers in relation to food. This includes providing information and advice to the public in connection with food safety, commissioning or coordinating research in science on such matters and supervising the safety of animal feed and other interests of users of animal feed.

FSA statutory powers include the power to carry out observations of this activity, monitor the performance of enforcing the applicable legislation by the relevant enforcement authority, issue guidance on control of foodborne disease and anything which facilitates the exercise of the FSA statutory function.

The FSA receives information and independent advice from its expert scientific advisory committees. The FSA normally publishes risk assessments on its website, and the main policy issues are decided in public by the FSA Board in open session in the light of scientific and other evidence. The FSA advises the UK, Wales, and Northern Ireland governments.

The FSA mission is 'food you can trust', and its vision for the food system is one in which:

- Food is safe.
- Food is what it says it is.
- Food is healthier and more sustainable.

The FSA directly delivers controls in meat, primary dairy and wine production. FSA staff and veterinary contractors inspect, audit, and assure businesses, including the signing of export health certificates. The FSA work with local authorities who inspect local businesses selling food - setting the inspection framework and providing advice and guidance. The FSA do the same for port health authorities, who inspect food imports.

The FSA advise ministers on food safety, food authenticity and consumer interests in relation to food in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. The policy areas the FSA advise

on are different in each nation. This is underpinned by risk assessments of new developments using science and evidence.

Across the three nations the FSA has responsibility for food and feed safety and hygiene; and food safety labelling, including allergen labelling. In Wales and Northern Ireland, the FSA is additionally responsible for compositional standards and labelling. In Northern Ireland, only the FSA is additionally responsible for nutritional standards and labelling and dietary health and surveillance. On relevant issues, the FSA cooperates closely with Food Standards Scotland, the Department for Health and Social Security (DHSC), the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), devolved governments in Wales and Northern Ireland and local authorities.

Now that the UK has left the EU, the FSA make recommendations to ministers about which food and feed products should be authorised for sale on the market in Great Britain and advise on the implications of regulatory changes in Northern Ireland. The FSA, with Food Standards Scotland, carry out risk analysis for these regulated products and provide advice to ministers, who decide whether the product can be placed on the market in England, Wales, and Scotland. The FSA also support the government's work on trade opportunities for the UK, by providing risk assessments of countries that want to start importing to the UK and demonstrating the UK's own food safety arrangements to countries it exports to. The FSA provide policy advice to support the delivery of effective and risk-based official controls - these are inspections, audits and surveillance, and sampling in food businesses.

The FSA's other areas of work include science and research on foodborne disease, food contaminants and food hypersensitivity; setting expectations for local authority food inspectors; food and feed regulation; tackling the most serious food fraud; consumer research on food issues; food and feed incident handling and response; and inspections of abattoirs and primary production. The FSA also has a role in looking at food safety implications of work undertaken by other government departments in the authorisation and surveillance of pesticides and veterinary medicines.

The FSA is also responsible for designating the official laboratories that carry out important chemical and compositional analyses on food and feed samples taken by local authorities or port health authorities. We do not own or operate any of these laboratories.

The FSA has posted a list of official laboratories in Great Britain and Northern Ireland that are designated to undertake sample analysis work.

## Food Standards Scotland

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<b>Name</b>	Food Standards Scotland (Scotland)
<b>Acronym</b>	FSS
<b>Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Risk assessment</li><li>• Risk communication</li><li>• Risk management</li><li>• Research</li></ul>
<b>Responsibilities</b>	
<b>Location</b>	Offices in Scotland (Aberdeen)
<b>URL</b>	<a href="http://www.foodstandards.gov.scot">http://www.foodstandards.gov.scot</a>

Food Standards Scotland (FSS) was established on 1 April 2015 by the Food (Scotland) Act 2015 as the public sector food body for Scotland. FSS is a non-ministerial office of the Scottish Administration, independent from Scottish Government Ministers and accountable

to the Scottish Parliament.

FSS' office is in Aberdeen with a remit in relation to food safety in Scotland similar to that of FSA in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, including being responsible for the inspection of fresh meat premises in Scotland. FSS has an independent Chair and non-executive Board, as does FSA, with a shared approach to openness and transparency. Their mission is to be Scotland's leading authority on food and feed safety and standards and on healthy eating, using data and evidence to provide assurance and advice that inspires consumer and business confidence and improves public health.

## Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

<b>Name</b>	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (England in relation to food safety)
<b>Acronym</b>	Defra
<b>Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Risk assessment</li><li>• Risk management</li><li>• Risk communication</li></ul>
<b>Responsibilities</b>	
<b>Locations</b>	London
<b>URL</b>	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs</a>

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) is a Government Department that has overall responsibility for the food chain in England, and for ensuring that the government discharges its responsibilities in relation to food. Together with its executive agencies Defra is responsible for legislation, implementation and monitoring of general food policy including: the functioning and regulation of the agri-food supply chain; risks to the aggregate food supply; consumer confidence in food including through food information and standards; impacts on food businesses and the sustainability of the agri-food system. Defra also has responsibilities for the environment, rural communities, animal health, animal welfare and plant health.

The Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) is an executive agency of Defra responsible for, amongst other things, assessment, issue, and maintenance of all national marketing authorizations for veterinary medicinal products; surveillance for residues of veterinary medicines and illegal substances in animals and animal products; and coordinating work in the area of anti-microbial resistance.

The Chemicals Regulation Directorate (CRD) part of the Health and Safety Executive is the regulatory authority for pesticides on behalf of Defra and the devolved governments in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. CRD carries out an official programme of pesticide residues testing of food in the UK and publishes the results on a quarterly basis. CRD and local authorities are also responsible for taking appropriate enforcement action.

Some of Defra's duties, for instance, in the field of legislation, implementation and inspection, are delegated to the Agriculture/Rural Affairs Departments in the Devolved Administrations in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Defra publishes risk assessments in the field of animal health and welfare. Furthermore, it cooperates, where appropriate, with FSA working groups. Defra is responsible for all aspects of water policy in England and works closely with the Drinking Water Inspectorate, which is responsible for regulating the quality of drinking water. There are similar arrangements in Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland.

## **Regional and local levels**

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Food businesses are responsible for making sure the food they produce, and supply is safe and is what it says it is, much of the FSA's work is aimed at supporting the system. The FSA is one of three key lines of defence in the food system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland:

1. Food businesses have primary responsibility for keeping the public protected. Businesses must have the right knowledge and controls in place to ensure the food they produce, sell and import is safe and authentic.
2. Local Authorities (LAs) across England, Wales and Northern Ireland are responsible for enforcing food safety and food standards. They must determine how risky businesses are and therefore how frequently they should inspect them.
3. The FSA provides a backstop for these protections, acting as the national regulator for food. This happens through monitoring and auditing LA performance.

The Food Standards Agency therefore has a key role as the Central Competent Authority in overseeing official food and feed controls undertaken by LAs. It also seeks to work in partnership with local authorities to help them to deliver official food and feed controls. The Agency is therefore proactive in setting and monitoring standards, and in auditing local authorities' delivery of official controls, to ensure that this activity is effective, risk based, proportionate and consistent.

The current models in England, Wales and Northern Ireland for providing assurance that food and feed businesses are meeting their legal obligations are underpinned by LA Environmental Health (EH) or Trading Standards (TS) regulatory teams undertaking official food and feed controls and related activities.

## **Further institutions**

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### **Further institutions**

- UK Food Standard Agency
- Hampshire Scientific Service
- Glasgow City Council
- Staffordshire County Laboratory and Scientific Services
- Institute of Food Research
- Aberdeen City Council
- City of Edinburgh Council
- MRC Collaborative Centre for Human Nutrition Research
- Dundee City Council Scientific Services
- Royal Veterinary College
- University of Plymouth
- University of Birmingham, Food Safety and Production Group
- Cranfield University
- University of Southampton
- Natural Resources Institute of the University of Greenwich
- University of Newcastle upon Tyne
- University of Glasgow, Research and Enterprise
- Food and Nutrition for Health Unit, University of Central Lancashire
- University of Aberdeen
- Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI)
- Kent County Council
- LGC Limited
- University of Liverpool
- Worcestershire Scientific Services
- The James Hutton Institute
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), including:
  - Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)
  - Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas)
- Moredun Research Institute
- University of Hull
- University of Surrey
- The Queen's University of Belfast
- Health and Safety Executive
- Royal Agricultural University
- SRUC (Scotland's Rural College)
- Public Health Wales NHS Trust
- University of Leeds
- Harper Adams University
- PATH-Safe
- University of Hertfordshire Higher Education Corporation

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