

You can find out more about cookies below, otherwise by continuing to use the site you agree to the use of the cookies as they are currently set.

I agree

I want to find out more

Food Security

This is a House of Commons Committee report, with recommendations to government. The Government has two months to respond.

Seventh Report of Session 2022–23

Author: [Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee \(https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/52/environment,-food-and-rural-affairs-committee/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/52/environment,-food-and-rural-affairs-committee/).

Related inquiry: [Food Security \(https://committees.parliament.uk/work/6861/food-security/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/work/6861/food-security/).

Date Published: 28 July 2023

This is the full report, [read the report summary \(summary.html\)](#).

Download and Share

↓ [Download the Full Report \[PDF 1MB\]](#)

(<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/41095/documents/200119/default/>).

↪ [Copy URL](#)

Contents

— [1 Introduction](#)

(<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5803/cmselect/cmenvfru/622/report.html#heading-0>).

— [2 The importance of food security](#)

(<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5803/cmselect/cmenvfru/622/report.html#heading-1>).

— [3 Government food policy](#)

(<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5803/cmselect/cmenvfru/622/report.html#heading-2>).

— [4 UK food supply](#)

(<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5803/cmselect/cmenvfru/622/report.html#heading-3>).

— [5 Domestic food security: key issues](#)

(<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5803/cmselect/cmenvfru/622/report.html#heading-4>).

— [6 Household food security](#)

(<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5803/cmselect/cmenvfru/622/report.html#heading-5>).

— 7 Obesity and access to healthy food

(<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5803/cmselect/cmenvfru/622/report.html#heading-6>).

— Annex – Summary of the Shropshire Review relating to labour

(<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5803/cmselect/cmenvfru/622/report.html#heading-7>).

— Conclusions and recommendations

(<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5803/cmselect/cmenvfru/622/report.html#heading-8>).

— Formal minutes

(<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5803/cmselect/cmenvfru/622/report.html#heading-9>).

— Witnesses

(<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5803/cmselect/cmenvfru/622/report.html#heading-10>).

— Published written evidence

(<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5803/cmselect/cmenvfru/622/report.html#heading-11>).

— List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

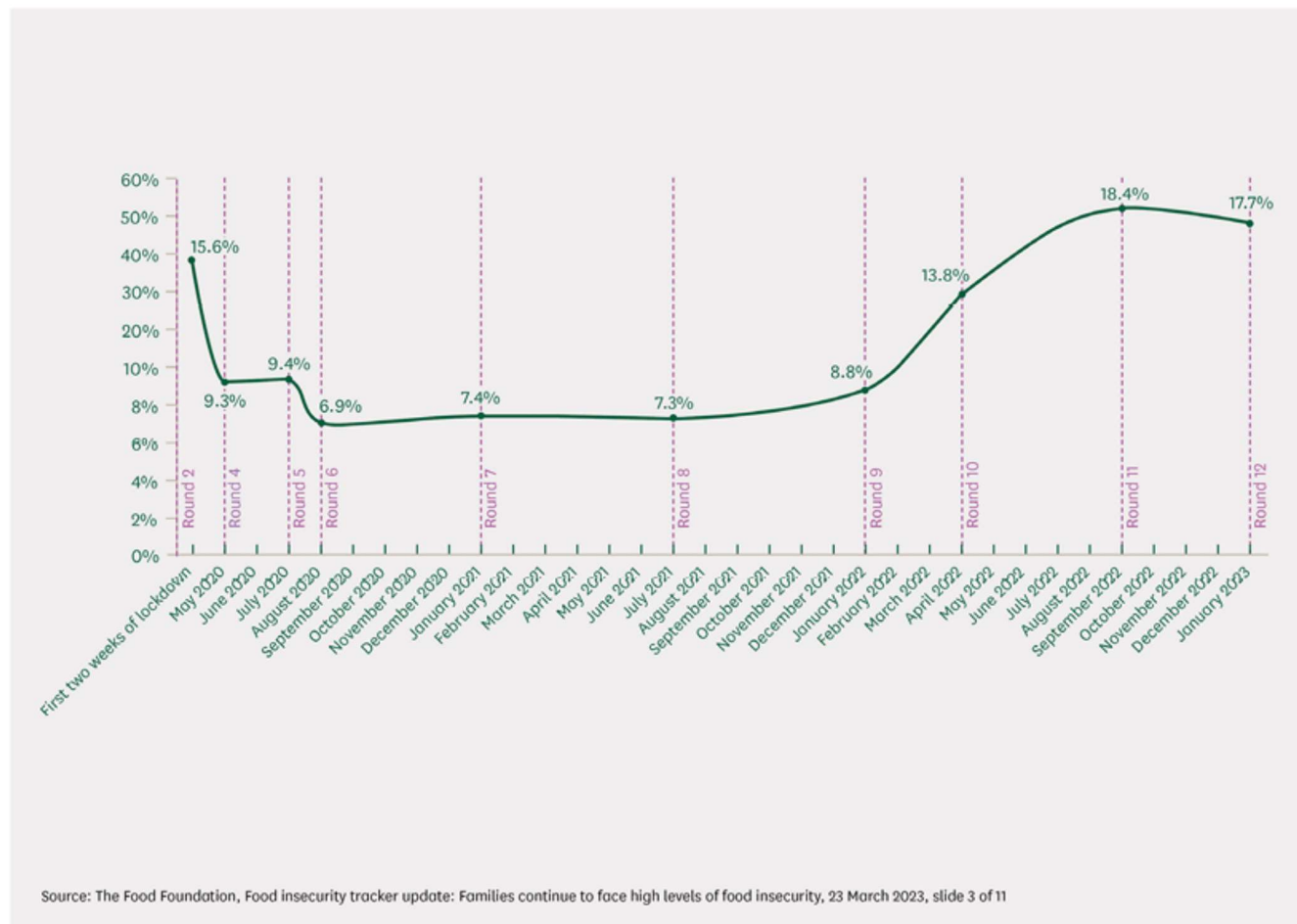
(<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5803/cmselect/cmenvfru/622/report.html#heading-12>).

— Footnotes

(<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5803/cmselect/cmenvfru/622/report.html#heading-13>).

1 Introduction

1. Increasing hunger “is a global crisis that is affecting all countries regardless of the state of their economy”—this was the view expressed to the Committee by the United Nations’ (UN) Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Professor Michael Fakhri.¹ The former Director-General of the Security Service, Baroness Manningham-Buller LG DCB, said that many had taken food security for granted,² but, as our Report found, during the covid-19 pandemic, instances of supply chain disruption leading to food shortages highlighted the fragility of our access to food.³ Although society has now largely returned to normal, nearly a fifth of households experienced moderate or severe food insecurity in January 2023 according to the Food Foundation, a greater proportion than during the pandemic as the chart below shows,⁴ as consumer food price inflation has accelerated to the highest rates in over forty years.⁵

Figure 1: Percentage of households experiencing food insecurity

2. What do we mean by food security?⁶ For the purposes of this report, we consider the five aspects set out in the Agriculture Act 2020:

- global food availability, which describes supply and demand issues, trends and risk on a global scale, and how they may affect UK food supply;
- UK food supply, which looks at the UK's main sources of food at home and overseas;
- supply chain resilience, which outlines the physical, economic, and human infrastructure that underlies the food supply chain, and that chain's vulnerabilities;
- household-level food security, which deals with issues of affordability and access to food; and
- food safety and consumer confidence, which details food crime and safety issues.⁷

3. This inquiry is focussed on the aspects of food security relating to supply sources for food—both domestically (often referred to as self-sufficiency) and abroad—as well as supply chain resilience, and household expenditure on food.⁸ We have also considered whether the current Government and departmental arrangements support food security. The full terms of reference can be seen here.⁹ During the inquiry, the Committee published 98 written submissions and took oral evidence from 18 witnesses. We would like to thank everyone who helped inform our work on this topic.

2 The importance of food security

4. Food security is one of the thirteen sectors listed in the Government's "Critical National Infrastructure" (CNI) document: CNI are "necessary for a country to function and upon which daily life depends".^{10, 11} As the Provision Trade Federation noted, the covid-19 pandemic and the ongoing situation in Ukraine had created a series of external shocks that were "challenging many long-standing assumptions about the inherent resilience of existing supply chain models, at both national and international levels".¹²

5. The Minister for Food, Farming and Fisheries (hereafter the Food Minister) at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), Rt Hon Mark Spencer MP, said that food security was "certainty very important to the Government".¹³ The most senior Defra official responsible for food security, the Director General for Food, Biosecurity and Trade, David Kennedy CB CBE, said that although the UK's food security has been "put to the test" over the last few years—citing the covid-19 pandemic and Brexit, as well as the current Russia-Ukraine conflict—the UK had "come through" without any food supply interruptions.¹⁴ Our Report on the pandemic, "Covid-19 and the food supply chain", however, highlighted that some households, especially those with a low income, had already been experiencing food insecurity which was then exacerbated by the pandemic. We stated that "going to back to the pre-pandemic 'normal' will not be good enough", and we called for the Government to show "clearer leadership on tackling the causes of [food] insecurity".¹⁵

6. The UK has demonstrated a resilient food supply during some of the most challenging events in recent times, in particular the covid-19 pandemic, the continuing Russia-Ukraine war and the UK's departure from the EU. The role of the Government and the food supply chain in achieving this resilience should be applauded. However, food security also needs to consider the Government's role in ensuring household level access to healthy and affordable food.

The UK Food Security Report and the high-level Food Security Summit

7. The publication by the Government of a UK Food Security Report (UKFSR) is a statutory requirement under section 19 of the Agriculture Act 2020.¹⁶ The first, and so far only, edition was published in December 2021, at a time when the covid-19 pandemic remained a significant factor for the food supply chain. This is no longer the case: Associated British Foods (ABF) noted that the UK food sector was currently facing a "wide range of significant cost and availability challenges" including energy prices, the effect of the invasion of Ukraine, labour shortages and trade disruption.¹⁷ ABF joined the National Food Strategy independent review (NFSIR) and the National Farmers' Union (NFU) in calling for the UKFSR to be published annually.¹⁸

8. The Act stated that the Government must publish a UKFSR "at least once every three years". The Director General said that under normal circumstances, when matters were relatively stable, a report once every three years was appropriate, but added that "things have been changing quite a lot recently, so we are considering doing an annual update, for example".¹⁹

9. The Food Minister stated he was "open to a more regular update, when that is necessary", adding that there was "no reason" why the UKFSR could not be published more often than required in the Act.²⁰ However, in March the Defra Secretary of State refused to consider moving towards an annual UKFSR:²¹ Rt Hon Dr Thérèse Coffey MP contended that given the previous UKFSR had been published only fourteen months earlier at that point, an updated version would not add any information, and that its production required a "considerable amount of time".²²

10. The UK Food Security Report (UKFSR) is a vital document to provide transparency about whether the UK will achieve each of the five elements of food security the Government is required to report on, and the associated risks to them. The analysis within the UKFSR should be central to steering Defra and wider Government strategy and policy-making on food security, and therefore should be as up-to-date as possible. Under the provisions of the Agriculture Act 2020, the next edition need not be published until December 2024, but we believe the current edition published in December 2021 is already out-of-date. We are therefore disappointed that the Secretary of State refused to consider publishing an annual UKFSR.

11. During his 2022 campaign to become Conservative Party leader and eventually Prime Minister, Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP had promised that he would "personally chair a new, annual, UK-wide food security summit".²³ In May 2023, Mr Sunak as the new Prime Minister together with the Defra Secretary of State, hosted a "UK Farm to Fork summit" at 10 Downing Street on "how government and industry

can work together to support a thriving UK food industry” although food security was not a priority issue.²⁴ Defra confirmed that this event was the promised food security summit.²⁵

12. While we welcome the Prime Minister’s commitment to chair an annual food security summit, we are disappointed that this evolved into May’s “Farm to Fork Summit” in which, although successful, food security was not the focus. This was a missed opportunity for the Government to demonstrate its seriousness towards the issue of food security. *The Prime Minister should chair a dedicated food security summit later this year and this should be an annual event, in line with the Prime Minister’s promise. Each annual food security summit should, as a minimum, cover the five statutory aspects of food security as set out in the Agriculture Act 2020, with a particular focus on those of most relevance at the time of the summit.*

13. *A fully updated edition of the UK Food Security Report should be published on an annual basis, and a month in advance of the annual food summit. This should be accompanied by an action plan for at least the next 12 months on the steps the Government will take to improve food security. A progress report of the actions taken since the previous year’s action plan should be included in the UK Food Security Report.*

3 Government food policy

The Government Food Strategy and its objectives

14. The Government Food Strategy (GFS) was published in June 2022,²⁶ following the publication of the final report of the National Food Strategy independent review (NFSIR), in July 2021. Because food policy is devolved, both only covered England. A Government food strategy was first announced by the then Defra Secretary of State, Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, in June 2019. At the time, the Government said it was “critical to review how we secure the food of the future” given various issues,²⁷ and the Government appointed Henry Dimbleby MBE to lead an independent review to consider how the UK’s food sector operated and to set out options for government policies to achieve its strategic objectives.²⁸

Box 1: National Food Strategy independent review led by Henry Dimbleby

Originally the NFSIR was to have been published in two parts, the first providing analysis and the second recommendation. However, circumstances meant that part one (published in July 2020) was instead an urgent response focussed on the impact of the covid-19 pandemic and the UK’s departure from the EU.²⁹

The second and final part was called “The Plan”, and noted that while the global food system provided sufficient calories to feed the world’s population, the food choices people made and the food that was produced was doing “terrible damage”, both to the planet and to people’s health.³⁰

The Plan said that “our eating habits are destroying the environment. And this in turn threatens our food security”, while at the personal level “cheap, highly processed food is also taking a toll on our bodies”. The Plan said that a vicious circle had been created, which it coined the “Junk Food Cycle”, that meant the UK was the “third-fattest country in the G7”, with almost 30% of adults obese.³¹

The Plan had four strategic objectives relating to many issues including food security:

1. Escape the junk food cycle to protect the NHS.
2. Reduce diet-related inequality.
3. Make the best use of our land.
4. Create a long-term shift in our food culture.³²

15. As was also the case with the NFSIR, the GFS was not solely concerned with food security, although it was an important element.³³ There was criticism of the GFS from witnesses. Henry Dimbleby said it was not “strictly speaking” a strategy “in that it is not a holistic explanation of how the Government want to create a food system that can feed us affordably, keep us healthy and maintain and improve the environment”.³⁴ Professor Tim Lang, Emeritus Professor of Food Policy at City, University of London, described the GFS as “a waste of trees” and that, when compared to other countries’ food strategies, “it passes as very weak”.³⁵ Professor Neil Ward, Professor of Rural and Regional Development at the University of East Anglia, and colleagues said that while the NFSIR’s analysis of the system and its current problems was “excellent”, by contrast the GFS was a “deep disappointment”, “a missed opportunity”, and a “downgrade from the Food White Paper that was promised”, adding that its focus and emphasis bore “little relation” to the to the analysis and prescriptions in the NFSIR.³⁶ Dr Kelly Parsons, post-doctoral researcher at the MRC Epidemiology Unit, University of Cambridge, said she was unclear as to whether the GFS had accepted the NFSIR’s analysis,³⁷ or on what basis the GFS was putting forward its proposed actions.³⁸ The Food Minister sought to clarify the situation by saying that the Government “broadly” accepted the NFSIR’s analysis which “in principle” the GFS had been based on.³⁹

16. Dr Parsons noted that the NFSIR contained a “robust set” of 14 recommendations which analysis had involved 70 different recommended actions. In contrast, Dr Parsons said she had struggled to determine if the measures in the GFS measures were “aspirations or concrete policy measures” and whether the recommendations concerned existing policy measures or new steps.⁴⁰ The Government did not provide a recommendation-by-recommendation response to the NFSIR, and thereby did not explain why recommendations had or had not been accepted: Dr Parsons said this absence was “pretty basic stuff”.⁴¹ Dr Parsons produced the table below showing how the GFS responded to the NFSIR’s recommendations:

Table 1: How the Government responded to the NFSIR’s recommendations

	NFSIR Recommendation	GFS Response
JUNK FOOD	Sugar and Salt Reformulation Tax	Not included

	NFSIR Recommendation	GFS Response
	<p>Eat and Learn Initiative for Schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sensory Education ▪ Food A-level + Review other qualifications ▪ Accreditation requirement ▪ Inspection of Cookery and Nutrition lessons and publication of 'research review' ▪ Funding for ingredients in cooking lessons <p>Double funding for School Fruit & Veg Scheme</p> <p>Address recruitment of food teachers</p> <p>Update School Food Standards (in line with Reference Diet when created)</p>	Partly Addressed - Levelling Up White Paper.
INEQUALITY	Extend Eligibility for Free School Meals	Not Included
	Funding for Holiday Activities and Food Programme	Included: Previous Commitment
	Expand Healthy Start Scheme	Not Included
	<p>Community Eatwell Programme, including:</p> <p>Social prescribing of fruit and vegetables</p> <p>Community infrastructure investments (kitchens, street markets)</p>	Partly Included, via Intervention Trials

	NFSIR Recommendation	GFS Response
LAND	Guarantee budgets for agricultural payments (and 30% to net zero/nature farming projects)	Not Included
	Create Rural Land Use Framework	Included
	Define minimum trade standards and mechanism	Not Included

	NFSIR Recommendation	GFS Response
FOOD CULTURE	£500mn Challenge Fund	Partly Included: Focus on Protein; Horticulture; What Works Centre, but limited budget?
	Agricultural Transition Plan Innovation Fund (existing measure)	
	£50mn Alternative Proteins Cluster	
	Reference Diet incorporating health and environmental considerations	Not Included
	Environmental Food Labelling	Not clear if same approach is supported
	Strengthen Procurement Policy, through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Redesign of Government Buying Standards for Food ■ Mandatory Accreditation Scheme ■ Monitoring and Enforcement Mechanism ■ Rollout of Dynamic Procurement 	Partly Included: Consideration for widening the scope of current rules ‘We will consult on Government Buying Standards for Food and Catering Services (GBSF). This consultation will include whether to widen the scope of GBSF mandatory organisations to cover the whole public sector and introducing an aspirational target that at least 50% of food spend must be on food produced locally or certified to higher environmental production standards’
There are several recommended measures under the objective Food Culture (and one under Junk Food) - listed below under governance		

Source: Dr Kelly Parsons, Cambridge University ([FS0093 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/114145/html\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/114145/html))

17. The Food Minister defended the fact the GFS did not accept all of the NFSIR’s recommendations, saying it would be “pretty difficult” to find past examples of where the Government had “wholeheartedly” accepted an independent report’s recommendations.⁴² He added that the Government was implementing the majority of the NFSIR’s recommendations.⁴³ The Director General for Food, Biosecurity and Trade said that, although the GFS did not include responses to each specific recommendation of the NFSIR, Defra and the Government more broadly “went through the recommendations one by one in great detail”. The Food Minister added that while the NFSIR was a “very important document” that Defra referred to on a regular basis, it was “not the only document that we refer to within Defra”.⁴⁴

18. **The final report of the National Food Strategy independent review (NFSIR) offered not only a detailed and considered analysis of the challenges facing our food system, including food security, but also put forward achievable actions. In contrast, the Government Food Strategy (GFS) has fallen short. It is not, as the Food Minister acknowledged, a direct response to the NFSIR as the Government originally proposed in 2019. It is perplexing that given the Government “broadly” accepted the NFSIR’s analysis, it did not accept more of its recommendations. The failure to publish a response to each recommendation—despite such an analysis existing within Whitehall—has hindered transparency.**

19. ***The Government should publish the detailed response to each of the NFSIR’s recommendations that it has drawn up within Whitehall as part of its response to this Report.***

Food policy across Government

20. The National Farmers’ Union (NFU) President, Minette Batters DL, said that “food should sit at the heart of Government”.⁴⁵ We previously noted that, despite some failings, the Government’s food policy response to the covid-19 pandemic had shown that Departments could work together to support vulnerable people’s access to food.⁴⁶ However, this Inquiry has not seen evidence of continuing close-collaboration. Anna Taylor, Executive Director of the Food Foundation, said that Departments were often “at odds with one another” which led to incoherence with the policy process around food.⁴⁷ Witnesses provided examples of how different aspects of a particular food policy were spread around several Departments that either had little logic to them—such as free school meals⁴⁸—or took conflicting views to one another—as in the case of food advertising.⁴⁹

21. Dr Parsons found that in 2020 responsibility in Whitehall for food system policy-making was “fragmented” as it involved 16 key government departments and public bodies with roles and responsibilities across the food system, “along with scores of agencies, public bodies and advisory groups”.⁵⁰ She noted that fragmentation could mean food policies lacked coherence and “undermine each other or miss opportunities to support other policy goals”. It could also mean that important issues “fall through the cracks”, and Dr Parsons highlighted hunger as an issue that crossed departmental remits “but no department is assigned lead responsibility”.⁵¹ Dr Parsons’ conclusions included that “there is no national food policy, or ministry of food, which draws all of the threads together”.⁵² The Food Minister did not identify which Department had responsibility for hunger when asked, but instead said it was a “shared responsibility” involving Defra, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), and HM Treasury.⁵³ He added that Defra was “consistently and constantly” discussing food-related matters with other Departments.⁵⁴

22. The GFS recognised that while “Defra is responsible for food policy”, the policy levers that influence the food system were “dispersed across government”.⁵⁵ Notwithstanding this, the GFS said that to implement the Strategy, Defra would “join-up within government to collectively drive progress”.⁵⁶ Dr Parsons noted, however, that the GFS offered “no details” on how this would happen, and said that it would be challenging for a sectoral department such as Defra to “drive forward a holistic whole-of-government approach to food”.⁵⁷

23. **There is an incoherent approach to food policy across Government. Defra is designated as the Government department responsible for food policy, but 15 other departments and agencies are involved in different elements of development and delivery. The successes of food policy coordination across Whitehall forged during the covid-19 pandemic have not been maintained, and we have concerns that a siloed approach to food policy could hinder the successful implementation of the Government Food Strategy. *Given the importance of food security, and the need for policy coherence and for strong leadership on this issue, we recommend that the Cabinet Office should undertake a comprehensive review of departmental responsibilities and structures regarding food policy and its various facets, and to publish its findings within 12 months of the date of publication of this Report.***

4 UK food supply

24. The report of the National Food Strategy independent review (NFSIR) said that food security is much broader than simply whether a nation produces enough food to feed itself (known as self-sufficiency).⁵⁸ In February 2023, for example, there was a shortage of some imported fresh salad items such as tomatoes, an episode which highlighted the importance of trade to food security in allowing

access both to sufficient food and year-round access to produce that could not be grown domestically. As the Secretary of State told the House at the time, without trade in food “many people would be eating turnips right now”.⁵⁹

The Government’s single food security commitment: self-sufficiency

25. The Government Food Strategy (GFS) observed that, “overall, for the foods that we can produce in the UK, we produce around 75% of what we consume”⁶⁰—known as the self-sufficiency ratio⁶¹—and it committed to maintain this at “broadly the same level in future”. Defra added that this demonstrated the Government recognised the “critical importance” of domestic food production and the role that it played in UK food security.⁶²

26. Speaking in support of the need to maintain self-sufficiency at current levels, the President of the National Farmers’ Union (NFU), Minette Batters, said were it to reduce it would be “to the enormous detriment of this country, especially facing into the global challenges that we are”,⁶³ although she offered a downbeat assessment in the near-term, saying “we are seeing contraction pretty much across every [farming] sector”.⁶⁴ The Country Land and Business Association (CLA) highlighted that while the UK was around 75% self-sufficient in foodstuffs that could be produced domestically, this figure “hides a very wide range of self-sufficiency levels”.⁶⁵ Dairy UK observed that the Government’s commitment to maintain domestic production at current levels was only made at the aggregate level, rather than sector specific.⁶⁶ For example, year-on-year UK meat production was generally stable, whereas domestic production of cereals and oilseeds was “more variable” due to external factors such as climate according to the Agricultural Industries Confederation (AIC);⁶⁷ further, the UK is only 17% self-sufficient in fresh fruit,⁶⁸ a figure far below the aggregate total of 75% and which Professor Tim Lang, Emeritus Professor of Food Policy at City, University of London, said meant the UK is “entirely dependent” on imports.⁶⁹ Ed Barker, Head of Policy and External Affairs at the AIC, noted in the pork sector the UK was self-sufficient for belly and shoulder, but “completely self-insufficient” in loin and leg as UK consumers prefer cuts for bacon;⁷⁰ Finally, the level of self-sufficiency for some sectors varies considerably during the course of a year due to seasonality which, Defra notes, is “complex and product specific”.⁷¹

27. Professor Lang said tracking food security was “not about only one indicator”, adding: “let us have multiple indicators”,⁷² and his view was echoed by Dr Kelly Parsons, post-doctoral researcher at the MRC Epidemiology Unit, University of Cambridge, who said that food security targets “should not just be looking at production levels” but rather other facets such as labour, inputs and diet.⁷³ The two academics’ joint paper called for a cross-Government approach, working with external groups, to produce a “revised, multi-criteria set of Food Security metrics” that drew upon “existing international systemic indicators and include broader determinants, as well as producing household and individual relevant metrics from UK experience”.⁷⁴ The NFU agreed, calling for a “National Food Security Index”, and set out a list of components for the index.⁷⁵

28. On what Defra termed the “actual consumption” measure of self-sufficiency, around 54% of the food on the UK’s plates is home-grown or from UK livestock—the remainder is imported. The United Nations’ (UN) Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Professor Michael Fakhri, said that trade was the biggest vulnerability in the global food system, as in the last thirty years policies had been “geared towards prioritising trade in food by any means necessary”.⁷⁶ The Greater Lincolnshire LEP Food Board said that Russia’s invasion of Ukraine was the first instance of a geopolitical disruption to global food supply which had “shattered” the post-Cold War consensus of a “world united in trade”.⁷⁷ The UK’s trading relationship with the EU was a “key factor” in ensuring UK food security according to the RSPCA, with it responsible for over 90% of all beef, dairy, eggs and pork products and nearly two-thirds of all food and feed not of animal origin that were imported into the UK.⁷⁸ The RSPCA called for “as frictionless trade as possible” with the EU,⁷⁹ something that may be challenged with the introduction of imports checks covering all EU agrifood imports from 31 October 2023—the British Veterinary Association (BVA) said that border controls serve the “vital purpose” of protecting against animal diseases, such as African Swine Fever.⁸⁰

29. The Government Food Strategy (GFS) made only one commitment to food security: to maintain “broadly the same level in future” the UK’s current rate of self-sufficiency of 75% of commodities we can produce. Food security, though, is more than just self-sufficiency: the UK is reliant on food imports, mostly from the EU. *The Government should, in conjunction with the food*

supply chain and others such as academics, develop a suite of food security indicators covering both inputs and outputs and set targets for them, which should in turn influence food security policy. The Government should outline its approach to this in its Response, and should launch the suite of indicators within 12 months of this Report's publication.

5 Domestic food security: key issues

30. The UK Food Security Report (UKFSR) highlighted that “many factors affect the output of domestic production”, including key inputs including labour, and fertiliser, as well as “the availability and suitability of land for particular forms of production”.⁸¹ We explore these particular factors in further detail below.

Availability of labour

31. In terms of the current impact of labour shortages, the Association of Labour Providers (ALP) described it as the “principal factor limiting UK food production”.⁸² The President of the National Farmers' Union (NFU), Minette Batters, concurred:

Without any shadow of doubt, access to people is really holding growth back. It is probably the single biggest issue. It is not just about seasonal; it is about workers, and it goes throughout the whole supply chain.⁸³

32. We have twice reported on the issue of labour supply and the food supply chain during this Parliament given concerns about the UK's access to migrant labour.⁸⁴ Our recent reports on labour in the food supply chain highlighted that it is “highly reliant on labour from the EU”: at its most extreme, migrant labour fills 99% of seasonal posts, such as harvesting.⁸⁵ The British Retail Consortium (BRC) said the seasonal labour shortages were contributing to higher food inflation.⁸⁶ While the Government has shown notable pragmatism and flexibility by issuing more seasonal worker visas than planned,⁸⁷ the number of available visas has fallen short of the figure 60,000 that the NFU said are needed.⁸⁸

Table 2: Changes in the announced number of agricultural seasonal worker visas available

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Original	30,000	30,000	30,000	28,000
Revised	30,000	38,000	43,000 plus 10,000 more if necessary	43,000 plus 10,000 more if necessary

Sources: Defra, [Up to 30,000 workers to help reap 2021 harvest](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/up-to-30000-workers-to-help-reap-2021-harvest-2) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/up-to-30000-workers-to-help-reap-2021-harvest-2>), 22 December 2020; Oral evidence taken on 14 December 2021, HC (2021-22) 713, Q355 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/3206/html/>) [Kevin Foster]; Defra, [Government provides boost to horticulture industry with certainty over seasonal workers](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-provides-boost-to-horticulture-industry-with-certainty-over-seasonal-workers) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-provides-boost-to-horticulture-industry-with-certainty-over-seasonal-workers>), 16 December 2022; Prime Minister's Office, 10 Downing Street and Defra, [An update following the UK Farm to Fork summit held at 10 Downing Street on 16 May 2023](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/outcomes-from-the-uk-farm-to-fork-summit/an-update-following-the-uk-farm-to-fork-summit-held-at-10-downing-street-on-16-may-2023) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/outcomes-from-the-uk-farm-to-fork-summit/an-update-following-the-uk-farm-to-fork-summit-held-at-10-downing-street-on-16-may-2023>), 16 May 2023

Note: During 2022–2024 a further 2,000 seasonal worker visas were available for the poultry sector.

33. The recently published “Independent Review into Labour Shortages in the Food Supply Chain”, commissioned by the Government in the Government Food Strategy (GFS) and led by John Shropshire OBE (hereafter the Shropshire Review), said that the food supply chain’s “chronic” domestic labour shortages “need to be addressed” if the level of UK self-sufficiency was to be increased.⁸⁹ It added that there was a “high risk” that insufficient labour could lead to supply shortages of certain essential foods in the future.⁹⁰ We warned in 2020 that without sufficient migrant labour, there was a danger that production may relocate abroad.⁹¹ Troublingly, the Shropshire Review found evidence that this prediction was already beginning to come true, reporting that some businesses had relocated their production overseas, while others had outlined future plans to follow suit, so “reducing the value of UK production [and] providing further uncertainty to UK food security”.⁹²

34. Highlighting that the UK, like many EU countries, was facing increased competition for migrant labour,⁹³ the Shropshire Review made several recommendations in respect of labour in the food supply chain, which closely matched our recommendations made in 2020 and 2022.⁹⁴

35. We welcome the report of the Independent Review into Labour Shortages in the Food Supply Chain (the Shropshire Review), and support its recommendations regarding both skilled and seasonal migrant labour. Troublingly, the Shropshire Review has found evidence that the UK's immigration policy is creating labour shortages that have "seriously impacted the food and farming industry" which it noted "may ultimately threaten food security".⁹⁵ As we foresaw in our earlier Report on labour, some production has now moved overseas as result of labour shortages, while other businesses are planning to. We also note that the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme does not affect net migration. *It is imperative that the Government listens to the Review's analysis and constructively considers its recommendations. In doing so, the Government must prioritise the country's long-term food security ahead of other considerations to ensure the food supply chain has access to sufficient labour, including from overseas, to allow it to realise its growth potential. Failure to do so places at risk the achievement of the Government's self-sufficiency target and broader food security. The Government must adhere to its stated six-month timeframe to respond to the Independent Review's report.*

UK fertiliser production and associated production of carbon dioxide gas

36. The UKFSR identified fertiliser supplies as a risk to domestic food production.⁹⁶ Nitrogen fertiliser was used by UK farmers on 89% of crop area for tillage crops (such as wheat, barley, potatoes and sugar beet) and 59% of grass, far exceeding the use of other types of inorganic (manufactured) fertiliser.⁹⁷ However, there was only one producer of nitrogen fertiliser in the UK, CF Fertilisers which was US-owned. It only met around 40% of the UK's need for nitrogen fertiliser i.e. the UK was not self-sufficient for this input.⁹⁸ The Agricultural Industries Confederation (AIC) said it was concerned that there was only one fertiliser plant in the UK, and the Food Minister also said that having one fertiliser plant in the UK "gives us some concern".⁹⁹

37. In March 2022, the Government established the Fertiliser Industry Taskforce where the Government and industry "work together to understand critical issues affecting the sector".¹⁰⁰ The AIC noted that the EU and the US had "offered significant funding to fertiliser manufacturers to continue to produce fertiliser".¹⁰¹ McCain Foods called for the Government to create a "national strategic farming reserve" of essential farming production supplies, in the event of restricted international supply of products such as fertiliser.¹⁰²

38. Ammonia is a key product used in the manufacture of nitrogen fertiliser, but the UK's one remaining plant currently imports it from Canada.¹⁰³ This had consequences for the food supply chain as ammonia production creates large quantities of carbon dioxide (CO₂) gas as a by-product which is captured and used in food packaging, drink carbonation, and abattoirs to stun animals. In 2021, the (then) two CF Industries plants had accounted for 60% of the UK food supply chain's CO₂ needs.¹⁰⁴ The Food Minister told us that the UK's CO₂ market had diversified since 2021 and so was less reliant on CF Industries.¹⁰⁵ Nevertheless, the Norfolk & Suffolk Agri-Food Industry Council reported that major meat processors had experienced a 20-fold increase in the price of CO₂.¹⁰⁶ The British Meat Processors Association (BMPA) called on the Government to prioritise CO₂ supply in the medium to long term to address food supply resilience.¹⁰⁷ However, the Government said "it is for the CO₂ industry, not government, to ensure supplies to UK businesses" (although it did briefly intervene in 2021),¹⁰⁸ and Defra had also encouraged the pig and poultry sector to expand their CO₂ storage facilities.¹⁰⁹

39. Nitrogen fertiliser plays a critical role in UK food security, and the production of ammonia used in it creates large amounts of carbon dioxide gas as a by-product which is vital for the food supply chain. There is only one plant remaining in the UK, which is currently using imported ammonia. This reliance on a single nitrogen fertiliser plant increases the risks to the UK's food security. The lack of CO₂ by-product has caused UK prices to increase markedly at a time when there are already considerable price pressures on the sector. While we welcome the establishment of the Fertiliser Industry Taskforce, the Government has not set out the steps it will take to protect domestic production of nitrogen fertiliser and ammonia used in it. *Given the importance of nitrogen fertiliser to UK food production and food security, the Government should set out how it will ensure its continued production in the UK, including the resumption of ammonia production to help support CO₂ supplies. Looking ahead, the*

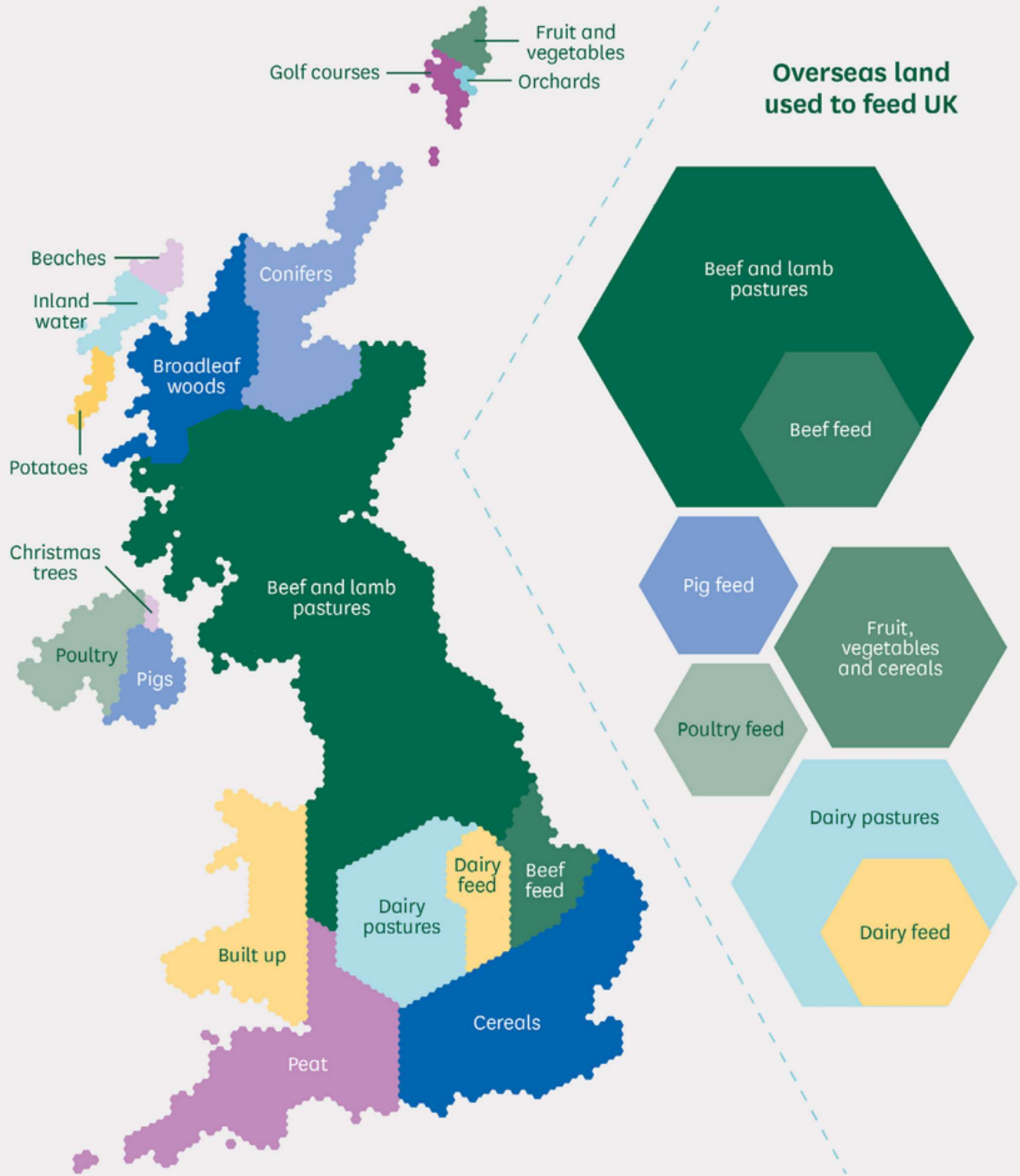
Government should take steps to support the increased production of nitrogen fertiliser in the UK, and in so doing examine the incentives offered by our competitors. The Government should produce an action plan addressing these points within 6 months of the publication of this Report.

Land use

40. The UKFSR noted that, in 2020, 71% of UK land area was used for agricultural production, the majority of which was grassland for grazing rather than crops, and that land use overall had changed little in the last thirty years. The UKFSR noted that not all land is suitable for growing crops, and some is suitable only for specific crops.¹¹⁰ It added that:

Food security rests ultimately not on maximising domestic production (which is market driven), but on making best use of land types which vary in quality and potential uses.¹¹¹

Figure 2: How land is used in the UK (shown as a proportion of the total, not geographically) plus how much overseas land is used to feed the UK (to the same scale).



Source: National Food Strategy, The Plan, July 2021, p90, figure 9.3

41. The NFSIR said that “what is most striking” is the amount of land used to rear lamb, beef and dairy cattle, both in terms of pasture and the land used to grow feed for these animals. It contended that this was a “very inefficient way to use our land” when calorie production was considered:

- 85% of land used to feed the UK (both here and overseas) is used to rear animals, but meat, dairy and eggs only provide 32% of the UK’s calories;
- the remaining 15% of total farmland used to grow plant crops for human consumption provides 68% of the UK’s calories.¹¹²

42. The NFSIR said a reduction in meat consumption of 30%¹¹³ (along with less influential measures)¹¹⁴ would allow the UK to produce the “same amount of calories from 30% less land”.¹¹⁵ However, the NFSIR noted the challenges involved given a “meat loving public”,¹¹⁶ and Henry Dimbleby acknowledged that it was currently “very difficult” for the Government to change our diets to lower meat consumption.¹¹⁷ A “senior Defra source” was reported as saying: “it’s not up to us to tell people what to eat” when it came to meat consumption.¹¹⁸ The Food Minister said that improvements could be sought to reduce meat production’s environmental impact.¹¹⁹ He added that “many of the landscapes [...] where sheep and beef are produced, are not suitable for growing peas and beans”, and that to plough the Cumbrian or Yorkshire uplands would be “catastrophic for carbon sequestration”.¹²⁰

43. Emily Hunter, lead policy advocate on land use at the Woodland Trust, said that decisions on taking farmland out of production was a decision for individual land managers or landowners, adding: “you can also improve the environmental performance of those areas without necessarily completely stopping food production”.¹²¹ The BRC said the pace of change was also an important consideration.¹²² The Food Minister noted how farmers shaped the landscape, arguing that they did so “as they want to have a positive impact on the land [...] and they want to produce great food”.¹²³ He added that such landscapes brought in “huge tourist revenues” and also helped people with their mental health who visited.¹²⁴

44. The relatively small amount of land used for horticulture was highlighted by Professor Tim Lang who noted it accounted for around 3% of the 6 million hectares that can be used to grow crops, which he described as “piddling and small”.¹²⁵ Defra said it recognised the importance of the domestic horticulture sector in “feeding the country”, and the GFS stated a “world leading” horticulture strategy would be produced for England.¹²⁶ However, in January 2023 the Government cancelled the planned strategy,¹²⁷ but in May it announced an “action plan” for the horticulture sector would be set out in the Autumn.¹²⁸

Forthcoming Land Use Framework

45. These issues and others will be considered in the Government’s forthcoming Land Use Framework (LUF) for England, which was announced in the GFS. Defra said that the LUF would reflect its objectives for agriculture, the environment and net zero.¹²⁹ The Government has said that it would publish the LUF during the course of this year.¹³⁰

46. The NFU President said that the LUF presented a “great opportunity” to consider how food production fits with existing targets for nature, clean water, clean air, housebuilding and tree planting.¹³¹ Professor Michael Winter OBE, Professor of Agricultural Change at the Centre for Rural Policy Research, University of Exeter, noted that the Government’s various policies and commitments to land—such as energy and housebuilding—had meant it had made “an over-promise of our land” which needed to be dealt with.¹³² The Country Land and Business Association (CLA) cautioned that the value of a LUF was “not clear” given the risk of “scope creep” which could create a “duplicative, prescriptive layer of bureaucracy”.¹³³ A common theme though was that the LUF should not be overly prescriptive.¹³⁴

47. The Food Minister said that the Government did not want the LUF to be “too prescriptive”, and Defra said that it envisaged the LUF as comprising a set of principles to guide local authorities, land managers, and others across England to “move towards” a more strategic use of land to help meet Government commitments on food security, environmental improvement, and net zero.¹³⁵ In terms

of implementing the LUF, the Food Minister said the Government had sufficient tools and levers to be able to motivate private landowners to try to follow, adopt or respond to the LUF, including the Environmental Land Management schemes (ELMS) and the planning system.¹³⁶

48. In December 2022, the Lords Committee on Land Use in England published its [report](https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/33168/documents/179645/default/) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/33168/documents/179645/default/>).¹³⁷ Its key recommendations were:

- create a Land Use Commission tasked with producing a land use framework. The framework must consider several factors, including food, nature, housing needs and the push for net zero.
- the Government needs to provide immediate clarity on the ELMS programme, ending the uncertainty which was causing serious problems for effective land use.
- there must be a multifunctional approach to the land, with multiple benefits being achieved in the same place, so that food production and environmental needs were combined with other uses where possible. This approach must be supported with an up to date and accessible evidence base.
- reforms were needed to support provision of green and open spaces and to make more effective use of Green Belt land for public access, nature and biodiversity.
- strengthen the planning system to help support nature and agriculture alongside new development, and to encourage better cross-border working.¹³⁸

49. We look forward to the publication of the Government's Land Use Framework (LUF) for England, and welcome the report of the House of Lords' Land Use Committee. *The LUF should not be overly prescriptive, but it should make clear what the Government's priorities are and how it will help the private sector to achieve them. In particular, the LUF should address the current balance of land use between that used for pastoral and animal-feed on the one hand, and horticulture.*

Fairness in the food supply chain

50. The Government has launched several reviews into fairness of different sectors within the supply chain, including dairy and the pig sector. For example, in the pig sector capacity issues during 2022 affected the processing industries' ability to slaughter and butcher pigs. But, as the National Pig Association highlighted, due to the nature of the contracts in place, it was the primary producers who were the most severely financially affected by the need to cull tens of thousands of healthy animals.¹³⁹

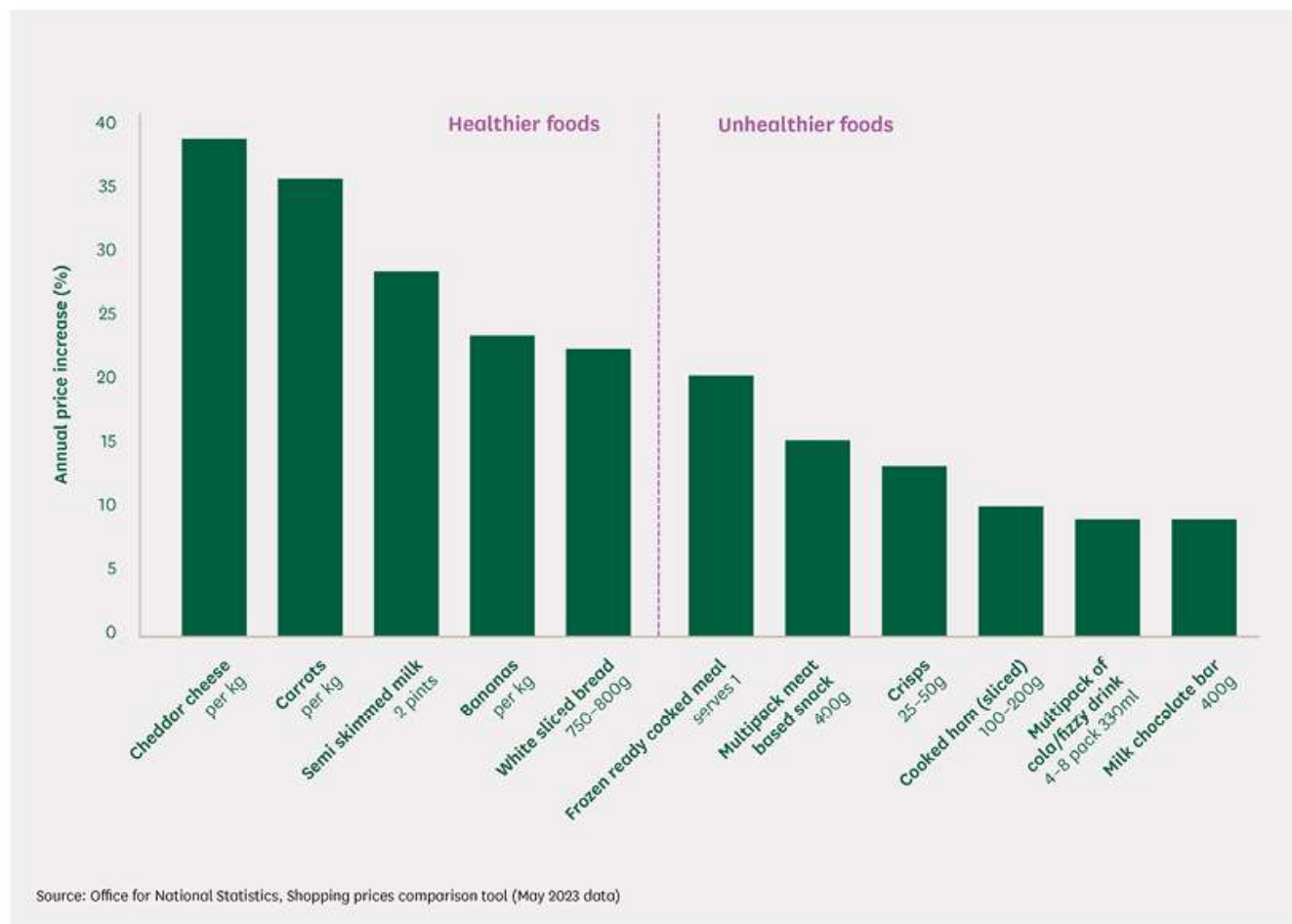
6 Household food security

The impact of household food insecurity and the role of Government

51. Food inflation is currently at rates not seen since the late 1970s, in sharp contrast to the last decade which was characterised by stable food prices and even periods of food deflation (i.e. falling food prices). Food prices were already increasing during 2021, but Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 exacerbated this situation, affecting food prices both directly, and also indirectly as key inputs such as energy and fertiliser prices rose very markedly.¹⁴⁰ At 18.3%, the latest rate of annual food price inflation (for May 2023) is considerably higher than the general Consumer Prices Index (CPI) rate of annual inflation (8.7%),¹⁴¹ and has been remained higher than some forecasters, including the Bank of England, had predicted.¹⁴²

Figure 3: Food and drink price inflation rising since mid-2021

52. The infographic below based on ONS data shows price changes for certain products. Food Active (a healthy weight programme delivered by the Health Equalities Group, and commissioned by local authority public health teams, NHS organisations, and Public Health England) noted in September 2022 that staple foods—such as bread, cereals, milk, cheese, eggs and yogurt—had seen the largest price rises, while the smallest price rises were seen on foods including meat (notably cooked ham and bacon), sugar, jam, syrups, chocolate, and confectionery—these trends have continued according to the latest ONS data shown in the infographic below. These differences in inflation, Food Active cautioned, could influence consumer purchasing behaviour and consequently diet quality “particularly in those on low incomes”.¹⁴³ Looking ahead, the Bank of England noted in May 2023 that “indicators continue to suggest that food price inflation will decline in coming months”.¹⁴⁴ The British Retail Consortium (BRC) said that the lag between input prices and retail prices is roughly 6 months, and noted that expected “fierce competition” between retailers plus innovation would benefit consumers.¹⁴⁵ However, even if food inflation fell to zero, this would only mean that prices remained stable, rather than falling: for food to become more affordable and therefore for household food security to improve, incomes would need to increase faster than the rate of food inflation.¹⁴⁶

Figure 4: Annual price increase in food items to May 2023

53. Defra said that it regularly engaged with retailers and producers to “explore the range of measures they can take to ensure the availability of affordable food”.¹⁴⁷ The issue of the profit margins of UK supermarkets was raised with the Secretary of State, who noted that low profit margins were employed to “get people in through the door”.¹⁴⁸ When challenged about their profit margins, Gordon Gafa, Commercial Director at Tesco plc, said his company overall made a profit of 4p in every pound which he said “is not any example of profiteering”.¹⁴⁹ The Food Commercial Director of Sainsbury’s plc, Rhian Bartlett, said they made less than 3p in the pound, adding not all cost increases had been passed onto consumer prices.¹⁵⁰ However, Tesco and Sainsbury’s issued dividends totalling £859 million and £319 million respectively in 2022/23 (increases of 18% and 34% compared to 2021/22 respectively)¹⁵¹—Mr Gafa said Tesco’s increase in dividends reflected an increase in “the health of the business”.¹⁵² We will consider how profits, and risks, are distributed between different actors in our new inquiry, Fairness in the Food Supply Chain.

54. The BRC noted that, as a rich country, the UK was able to effectively compete in the global market for supplies by paying more, but there was an adverse impact on consumer prices.¹⁵³ For example, Gordon Gafa said following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, which is responsible for around 60% of the global sunflower crop: “we had to fight hard for customers to secure availability, we had to pay more”.¹⁵⁴

55. An Institute of Grocery Distribution (IGD) survey found that a “significant number” of shoppers were skipping meals to save money, affecting people from all socio-economic groups, although this was most pronounced in the lower groups.¹⁵⁵ The Trussell Trust, the UK’s largest food bank organisation, said that the issue facing households was not one of food availability, but rather of “income

sufficiency”, adding that the current situation was “severe”.¹⁵⁶ However, on the definition of food security put forward by the Food Minister, this would not constitute an issue of food security: he defined it as “is there food on the shelves?”, whereas the ability of consumers to afford to buy food was, he said, “a different discussion to food security”.¹⁵⁷

56. The Food Minister said that household affordability of, and access to, food does not constitute food security. We disagree. The high and sustained rate of food price inflation means many households are having to take measures to save money like skipping meals. This is happening across all across all socio-economic groups, but is most pronounced in lower socio-economic households. A lack of household food security can lead to physical and mental health consequences for those affected.¹⁵⁸ It is concerning that the Food Minister is not taking households’ ability to access food into account when considering food security and we recommend that the Government should change its position. If it is unwilling to do, it should lay out its reasons for taking that position in its response to this report.

Food bank use

57. The increases in food price inflation and the cost of living more generally have been cited as reasons for increased food bank use. The Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN) said that during January and February 2023, 66 of the 68 food banks organisations surveyed said users cited increases in the cost of living as a reason why they were using the food bank, while 70 of 76 organisations said demand for their services had increased.¹⁵⁹ Looking at the whole of the 2022/23 financial year, the Trussell Trust’s 1,646 UK food bank locations distributed nearly 3 million emergency food parcels, which was 16% more than its previous high in 2020/21 (the first year of the covid-19 pandemic). The 2022/23 figure was also 120% higher than the figure for five years ago, with the three areas of highest demand per head of population being Wales, north east England, and East Anglia.¹⁶⁰ The Trust reported that some 328,000 families had used one of their food banks for the first time.¹⁶¹ Sustainable Food Places Network said its food aid organisation members were experiencing an increase in demand at the same time that projects were experiencing a “huge drop in food and cash donations”.¹⁶² IFAN said that because food aid organisations rely on surplus food, it cannot guarantee it will be adequate, healthy or nutritious which it said can pose particular difficulties if a person requires specific nutrition needs due to, for example, a disability.¹⁶³

58. The Trussell Trust said that providing emergency food parcels to people facing an income shortfall was “not a sustainable solution”, adding that “nothing can replace the dignity of households having enough income to buy the food they need for their family”.¹⁶⁴ The Local Government Association (LGA) was one of several organisations to call on the Government to take steps tackle rising food insecurity and expand access to access healthy and nutritious food. The LGA said income presented the “most significant barrier” to an adequate diet, prompting it to propose a benefits system that reflected “true living costs”.¹⁶⁵ While benefit rates were outside of the National Food Strategy independent review’s (NFSIR) scope, it did note that studies in the UK had shown, it said contrary to popular belief, that as poorer families’ income goes up, they spend more on healthier food and “actually cut” spending on alcohol and tobacco.¹⁶⁶

59. When asked about demand at food banks, the Food Minister acknowledged the issues some consumers were facing, adding it was a “huge challenge” for some people to be able to afford food. Mr Spencer said that the “best way” to resolve this was through the additional support the Government had provided—as set out in paragraph 62—and “by making sure that work pays” so people could work their way out of poverty.¹⁶⁷

60. In February, we visited a number of food aid organisations in Liverpool. We visited the Blue Base Community Pantry and saw the work of Everton in the Community (Everton Football Club’s official charity), Fans Supporting Foodbanks and St Andrew’s Community Network. Unlike some other food banks, the Pantry required users to pay a fee of £3.50 which entitled them to claim around £20 of groceries that they selected from a range of stalls. We were told this reduced the stigma of using the food bank, as it was not seen as a “free hand-out”, and enabled choice rather than being given a pre-prepared food box.¹⁶⁸ It was open to all local people, many of whom we spoke to about their experiences. We also met with the Director of the Liverpool Football Club Foundation, Matt Parish, and held a meeting with staff of the St Andrew’s Community Network including their CEO, Rich Jones. We’d like to thank everyone who made our visit a success.

61. We applaud the work being done by charities in Liverpool and around the country to support those in need of food aid. In particular, the pantry model of food aid provided a sense of dignity to users, as well as choice, and is something we would encourage other food aid organisations to consider where possible.

The Blue Base Pantry in Liverpool. The photograph of one of several stalls at the Pantry illustrates how users are able to select the food they would like, rather than being handed a food box as has often been the traditional approach. The photograph was taken after the close of business so as to not to identify any users.



Government support to households

62. In response to the pressures facing households, in addition to helping with energy bills the Government committed £37 billion to tackle the increased cost of living during 2022/23, which included a number of measures targeted at low-income families, including £1.5 billion through the Household Support Fund to help households with the cost of essentials, including food.¹⁶⁹ For 2023/24, the Government provided further support totalling £26 billion including:

- additional Cost of Living Payments totalling up to £900 for over 8 million households in receipt of eligible means-tested benefits;
- £300 additional Cost of Living Payment to more than 8 million pensioner households; and
- £150 Disability Cost of Living Payment to 6 million disabled individuals.

Other support included benefits, pension rates and the benefit cap levels uprated by 10.1%, and £1 billion for the Household Support Fund.¹⁷⁰

63. Higher food inflation and the rise in the cost of living more generally is meaning that food banks are experiencing record levels of demand this year. Earned income, not food banks, are ultimately the solution for household food insecurity. We welcome the substantial support packages, including the index-linked rise in welfare benefits and pensions, that the Government have provided to households which help them to meet their increased bills and therefore have more money to spend on food than otherwise. *The Government should examine whether the totality of support to lower-income households, including from central and local Government and charities, is sufficient to ensure household food security without the need to regularly use food aid organisations and publish its findings within six months of the publication of this Report.*

Free school meals

64. The Government Food Strategy (GFS) noted that the covid-19 pandemic had “highlighted the importance” of the provision by schools of healthy and nutritious food. Free school meals (FSM) are a benefit worth £457.90 per child per year according to the LGA.¹⁷¹ Except for infant school children (Key Stage 1), free school meals (FSM) are only available for children from an eligible household. The Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) said that 800,000 children—a third of children living in poverty—are not eligible for FSM as their household is in receipt of Universal Credit (UC) and has in excess of £7,400 post-tax income (equivalent to £18,000 and £24,000 once benefits income are considered).¹⁷² Food Active called for the eligibility criteria to be broadened to ensure those children living in poverty “have at least one hot meal a day”.¹⁷³ Similarly, the LGA called for the criteria to cover everyone of school-age living in food poverty, and also supported automatic enrolment onto FSM schemes to expand uptake.¹⁷⁴ The #EndChildFoodPoverty (<https://endchildfoodpoverty.org/>) coalition established by footballer Marcus Rashford went further and called for all children living in a UC-claiming household to be entitled to FSM. The NFSIR’s interim report also proposed this measure,¹⁷⁵ but its final report put forward a somewhat less generous approach of increasing the eligible annual household income threshold for UC claimants to £20,000. The increase in UC claimants during the pandemic meant the cost of providing FSM to all children in a UC-claiming household had increased by £120 million.¹⁷⁶ The NFSIR explained the proposed £20,000 means-test ceiling was intended to “target those in most urgent need of free school meals”.¹⁷⁷ Henry Dimpleby said he was a “massive protagonist” for universal FSM, citing examples of Sweden and the London Borough of Newham where its introduction had created cultural benefits and improved the academic performance of all children.¹⁷⁸

65. The Government has not made any changes to the eligibility threshold for FSM for children living in a UC-claiming household. It stated in October 2022 that it did not have plans to assess the cost of changing the current eligibility conditions for FSM.¹⁷⁹ In a letter to the Committee, the Food Minister said that were the threshold to be raised to include all pupils in households in receipt of UC it would mean 50% of all pupils were eligible for FSM, including “some in households with incomes exceeding £40,000 per year”. He added that the costs of both funding such an expansion and for the consequential costs for additional school funding that is provided on the basis of FSM-eligibility—notably the Pupil Premium for disadvantaged children¹⁸⁰—“would quickly run into billions of pounds”.¹⁸¹ The Food Minister highlighted that the Government’s previous actions¹⁸² meant there were more children receiving FSM than ever before.¹⁸³

66. We welcome steps by the Government to expand free school meal (FSM) eligibility. More children are receiving FSM than ever before in England, including all infant school children. However, there is evidence that extending FSM eligibility further could reap substantial benefits that outweigh the costs.¹⁸⁴ *The Government should, as a minimum, undertake a detailed study of the existing literature on the costs and benefits of extending FSM, which should as a minimum include extending FSM (a) for those children living in a Universal Credit claiming household, the impact of (i) raising the means-test to £20,000 post-tax income but before claiming benefits and (ii) removing the means-test and (b) universal provision. The Government should report its findings to the Committee within six months of the date of this report. In the meantime, the Government should urgently undertake a review with a view to increasing the household income threshold criteria for FSM from the current level of £7,400 (after tax and excluding benefits) so that more children living in poverty become eligible. To reduce the costs of extending FSM eligibility, the Government should consider the link between the FSM and the Pupil Premium for those children living in households above a certain income threshold.*

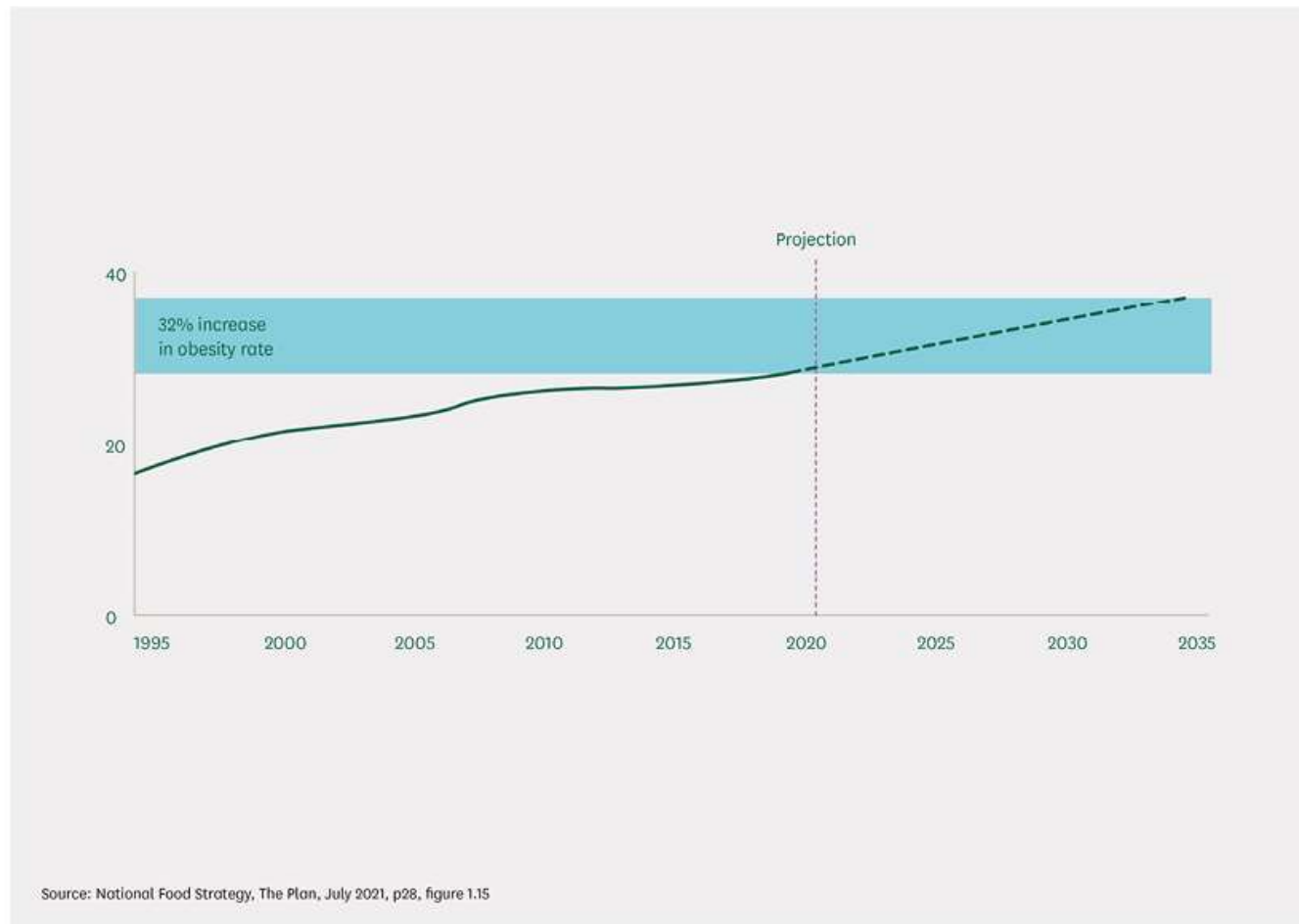
A right to food?

67. The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Professor Michael Fakhri, said that defining the right to food “means that everyone is entitled to their food always being adequate, available and accessible”.¹⁸⁵ We have previously recommended that the Government consult on whether a Right to Food should be given a legislative footing, although the GFS made no mention of the Right to Food.¹⁸⁶ Professor Fakhri highlighted that Scotland has legislated for the Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act 2022, and that “by making food a right, it also creates accountability between people and the Government”.¹⁸⁷ The UN Special Rapporteur noted that he had requested to the Government a Country Visit of the UK.¹⁸⁸ The Government recently said that it would discuss suitable dates with Professor Fakhri’s office for a visit “in due course”.¹⁸⁹

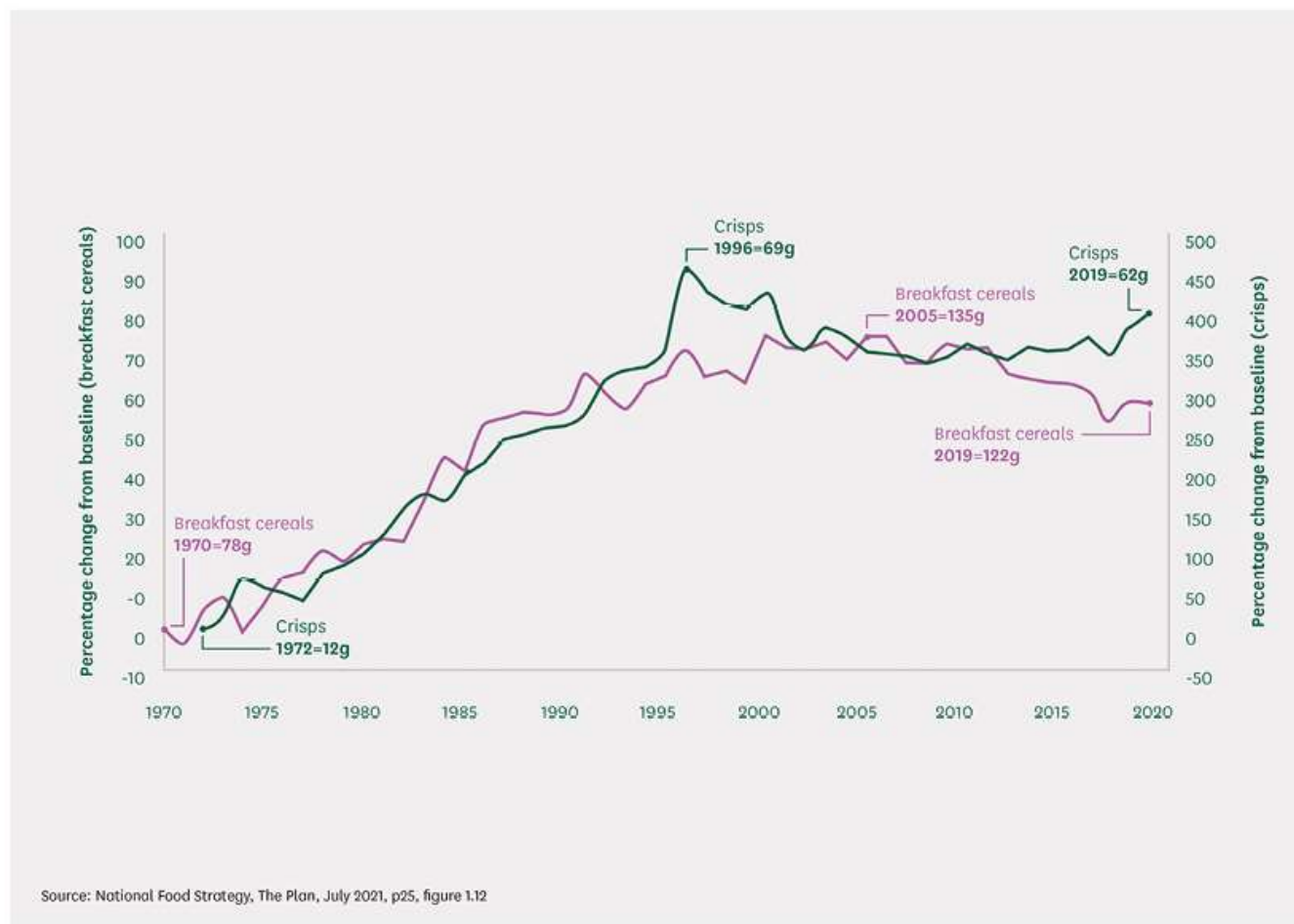
68. *We support the United Nations’ Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food’s request to undertake a Country Visit to the UK, and call for the Government to facilitate such a visit before the end of this year if Professor Fakhri is available or, if he is not, as soon as possible thereafter. As part of his Country Visit, we invite Professor Fakhri to assess whether a statutory right to food would be appropriate for England and, if so, what this might look like.*

7 Obesity and access to healthy food

69. Access to food does not necessarily mean access to healthy food. The National Food Strategy independent review (NFSIR) highlighted the increasing levels of obesity in the UK, with the rate of obesity having climbed from around 17% in 1995 to around 30% in 2020. The NFSIR said that the cost of bad diet was already “astronomical” both in terms of the impact on people, and financially. The obesity rate was forecast to rise by a further third to around 40% in 2035.¹⁹⁰

Figure 5: Obesity is expected to keep rising

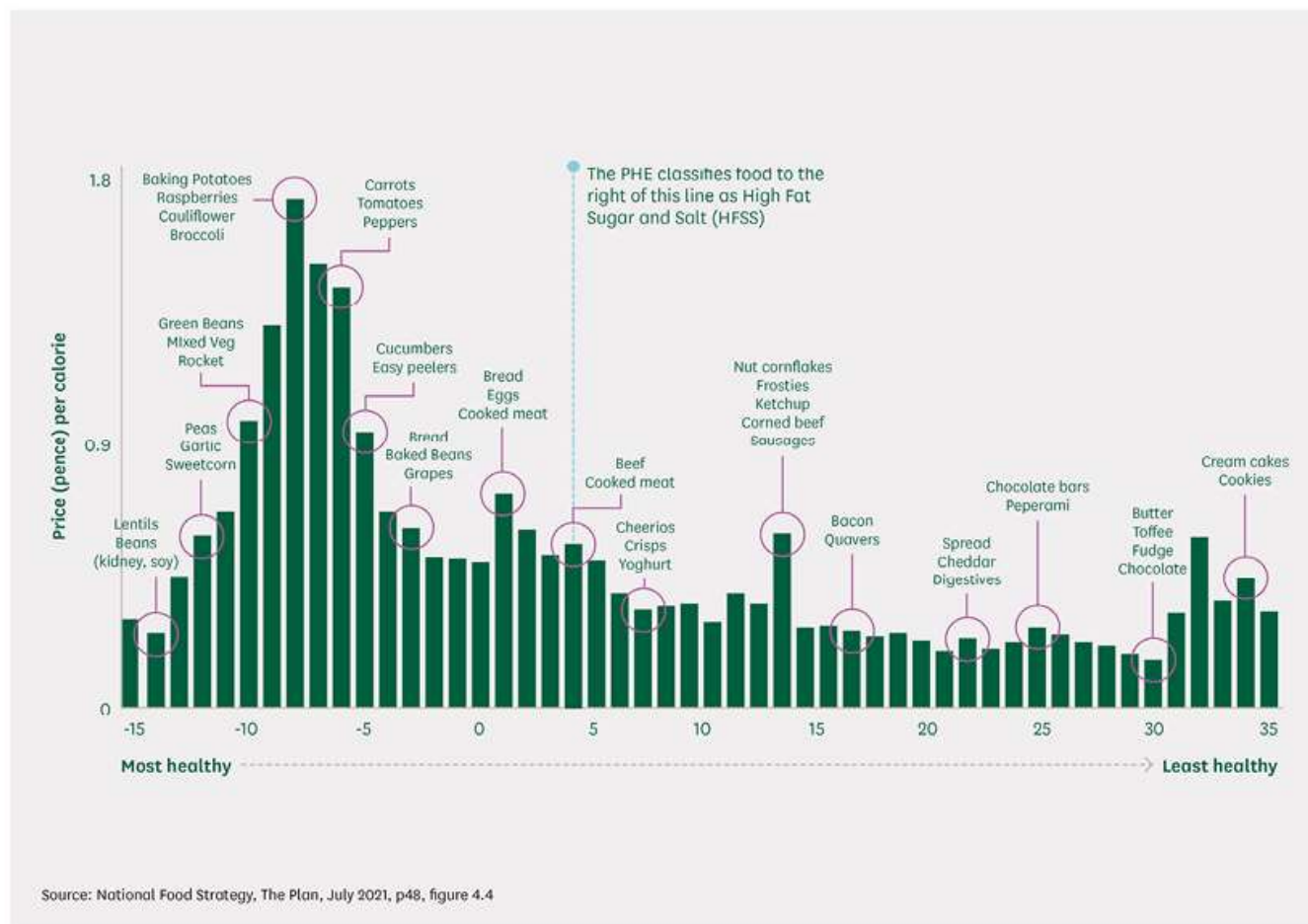
The Government published an obesity strategy in July 2020 which said tackling the issue was “one of the greatest long-term health challenges this country faces”.¹⁹¹ The Strategy noted that the UK’s rates of obesity were “storing up future problems for individuals and our NHS”.¹⁹² The Government said that obesity was associated with reduced life expectancy and was a risk factor for a range of chronic diseases, including cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, certain cancers, liver and respiratory disease, and could also impact on mental health. The NFSIR warned that the increase in obesity rates would help to create an annual bill of £15 billion for the NHS for Type 2 diabetes alone by 2035/36, which was one and a half times more than the cost of cancer to the NHS today.¹⁹³ Overall, the Government said that the cost of obesity to individuals, society and the NHS was “huge”.¹⁹⁴

Figure 6: Purchasing of crisps and sweetened breakfast cereals has risen sharply since the 1970s

The obesity—food insecurity paradox

70. Dr Parsons added that it was not possible to assume that being food insecure would make people less obese, adding “in fact, it is quite the reverse in many cases. That is the paradox”.¹⁹⁵ Food Active noted that lower-income households had to make a “difficult decision” between food quantity and quality, and that often quantity took precedent to avoid hunger so resulting in meals that were “high calorie but nutrient poor”.¹⁹⁶ Henry Dumbleby said (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/10966/html/>) that there were obese people who were malnourished due to a lack of nutrients in their diet, which he called the “hidden hungry”.¹⁹⁷ Food Active added that obesity rates of children were increasing “significantly faster” in communities with higher deprivation levels.¹⁹⁸ The Food Foundation found that in order to meet the cost of the Government-recommended healthy diet, the poorest fifth of UK households needed to spend 50% of their disposable income after housing costs.¹⁹⁹ This compared to a figure of 43% in their 2022 report,²⁰⁰ and was in contrast to the richest fifth who would have to spend 11% of their post-housing income.²⁰¹

71. The NFSIR presented a chart showing the price per calorie of different foods compared to their healthiness, and noted that healthy food tends to cost more per calorie. In particular, the NFSIR found that highly processed foods—which it defined as high in salt, refined carbohydrates, sugar and fats, and low in fibre—were on average three times cheaper per calorie than healthier foods. It noted that this was one reason why bad diet was a particularly acute problem among those on lower incomes.²⁰² The Government Food Strategy (GFS) added that other factors included having the equipment, cooking skills,²⁰³ as well as the time to prepare and cook healthier food than more convenient alternatives, constraints that it said were especially applicable for those on low incomes.²⁰⁴

Figure 7: Healthy foods tend to cost more per calorie

The “Junk Food Cycle”

72. The NFSIR coined the phrase “Junk Food Cycle” which it described thus:

We have a predilection for calorie dense foods, which means food companies invest more time and money creating these foods, which makes us eat more of them and expands the market, which leads to more investment, which makes us eat more.²⁰⁵

The NFSIR said food companies had similarly become trapped, noting that of all manufactured food products sold in the UK, 85% were deemed to be so unhealthy they are unsuitable for marketing to children.²⁰⁶ Mr Dimbleby said that the food industry’s own junk food cycle demonstrated it was subject to a market failure and that it therefore required Government intervention.²⁰⁷

73. The GFS did not address the issue of health and food: Henry Dimbleby described this as a “big hole” in it²⁰⁸—Mr Dimbleby subsequently resigned in March 2023 as the Government’s “Food Tsar”, citing an “insane” lack of Government action on obesity.²⁰⁹ There was criticism of the GFS in respect of health and food from a range of stakeholders.²¹⁰

74. The GFS said the issue of health and food would be incorporated into the previously-announced Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) White Paper on health inequalities. Professor Lang said Defra had “simply passed” this matter to DHSC, while Dr Parsons said that there was “a real sense of kicking the can down the road”.²¹¹ Subsequently, the health inequalities White Paper, originally due to be published in “spring 2022”,²¹² was first delayed,²¹³ and then cancelled altogether in January 2023.²¹⁴ Instead, the DHSC said it

would publish a much broader “Major Conditions Strategy”, with a commitment to publish an interim report in summer 2023,²¹⁵ with a final report published by the end of 2023.²¹⁶ This Strategy would “cover many of the same areas as the Health Disparities White Paper”.²¹⁷ The interim report of the Major Conditions Strategy has yet to be published at the time of writing.

75. The UK is in the midst of an obesity crisis and is facing a situation of around 40% of the adult population being obese by 2035. Unchecked, this will have profound consequences for the NHS. Food that is high in fat, sugar and salt (HFSS) is often considerably cheaper per calorie than healthy food. This helps to explain the paradox that those on low-incomes are more likely to be obese. Indeed, the poorest 20% of households need to spend half their disposable income to eat the Government-recommended healthy diet. The National Food Strategy identified health and food as a vital issue and provided expert analysis, yet the Government Food Strategy did not cover the topic at all or set out any actions to break the junk food cycle. Instead, it passed the buck to the Department for Health and Social Care to include in a White Paper that was first delayed, and then cancelled in favour of the as yet unpublished Major Conditions Strategy. *The Government should respond to the NFSIR’s analysis on health and food within six months.*

NFSIR proposals to break the junk food cycle and the Government response

76. The NFSIR said the UK now had a “once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to reshape the food system” given the momentum for change throughout society and given the “widespread recognition” that the UK’s national diet needed to change “as a matter of urgency”, particularly in light of the pandemic where the high levels of obesity had been, in the Government’s own view, a “major factor” in the UK’s relatively high death rate.²¹⁸ The NFSIR recommended introducing a Sugar and Salt Reformulation Tax; creating a statutory duty for all larger food companies to report annually on HFSS (high in fat, sugar and salt) sales and healthier foods (as well as food waste); and launching a new “Eat and Learn” classroom initiative for schools.²¹⁹

77. The GFS did not provide a response to any of these recommendations,²²⁰ and the Government subsequently confirmed to the House it had rejected the salt and sugar duty, and did not directly address the idea of the “Eat and Learn” initiative.²²¹ The Food Minister said “now is the right time to introduce new taxes that will push up the cost of food”,²²² a view shared by Henry Dimbleby.²²³ This is despite the fact that the GFS noted that the Soft Drinks Industry Levy—which was similar in nature to the proposed reformulation tax—had been “hugely successful” resulting in a fall of 44% in the amount of sugar within soft drinks within the Levy’s scope.²²⁴ However, the GFS did state that further work would be taken on some issues including mandatory public reporting of health metrics, determining the role of ultra processed foods in driving down obesity, and developing actionable evidence about what interventions encourage and enable the uptake of healthier and more sustainable diets for all.²²⁵

78. The Government rejected the NFSIR’s proposals to break the junk food cycle, including the sugar and salt reformulation tax proposal. While such a tax may cause consumer prices to rise, it may lead consumers to substitute cheaper healthier foods into their shopping basket. *The Government should undertake and publish a full impact assessment of the introduction of a sugar and salt reformulation tax, providing analysis based on different, realistic values of the tax and submit this to the Committee within three months of the publication of this Report.*

79. The Government has set out three actions that could help encourage healthier eating. *On mandatory public reporting against a set of health metrics, this should become a requirement within the next six months. Further research on ultra-processed foods as a contributor to over consumption of higher calorie foods should commence at once and at pace, with the findings reported to the Committee within 12 months of the publication of this Report.*

Regulations restricting the promotion and advertising of HFSS food

80. The Government tabled the Food (Promotion and Placement) (England) Regulations 2021²²⁶ regulations in December 2021 to introduce restrictions on the sale and advertising of food high in fat, sugar and salt (HFSS) by businesses with over 50 employees. To date:

- restrictions on the placement of HFSS food, for example, near checkouts or queuing areas, are in force.

- the advertising of HFSS food aspect of the regulations has been delayed three times from the original date of April 2022, and was now due to come into force in January 2025.²²⁷
- the ban on certain “volume price promotions” on HFSS food, including “Buy One, Get One Free” (known as BOGOFs) and promotions offering extra volume for the same price (e.g. “50% extra free” type deals) had been delayed twice, first until October 2023,²²⁸ and then until October 2025.²²⁹ All “meal deals” were specifically excluded from this provision.²³⁰

The Government said the restrictions on volume price promotions, together with location restrictions were estimated to create “significant” health benefits worth £71.1bn over 25 years, compared to a cost of £5.6bn, equating to a monetised benefits to costs ratio of around 14:1.²³¹

81. The Government’s Explanatory Memorandum to the regulations noted that academic evidence showed volume price promotions were “extensive, deep and effective” at influencing food preferences and purchases, and actually increased spending by encouraging people to buy more than they had intended to.²³² A Food Foundation survey found that 81% of adults would find it helpful for price promotions to be targeted on products like meat, fruit and vegetables,²³³ prompting its Executive Director, Anna Taylor, to call for BOGOFs on staple foods.²³⁴ Henry Dimbleby said in October 2022 that implementing the volume price promotion changes would “actually help household costs”.²³⁵ The Prime Minister, however, said it was “not fair” for the Government to restrict consumers’ options, while “while ensuring we’re striking the balance with our important mission to reduce obesity and help people live healthier lives”.²³⁶

82. In January 2023, the Food Minister was asked about the planned volume price promotions and spoke against the principle of the policy. In response to the question, “is it right for the Government to ban buy one, get one free?”, he replied “I don’t think we should be doing that at all”, describing it as “over-zealous, frankly”, although he subsequently clarified that he had been giving a personal view.²³⁷

83. It is regrettable that the introduction of the ban on volume price promotions of food high in fat, sugar and salt (HFSS) has been further delayed to October 2025. The Government said that these delays were necessary to allow it to consider the impact on consumers and businesses in the light of the “unprecedented global economic situation”. No justification was provided as to why it will take over two years to make this assessment. *The Government should set out a detailed timetable for its consideration of how the regulations restricting HFSS food volume price promotions will impact consumers and businesses.*

84. We are not convinced that the delay to banning certain volume price promotions for HFSS food will save consumers money, given the Government’s own analysis on this matter. Of less doubt is that it will make the fight against unhealthy eating and obesity even harder. *The Government Response should forecast rates of being overweight and being obese had the HFSS food volume price promotions been introduced in October 2022 compared to their planned introduction of October 2025. The regulations restricting discounts on HFSS food should be broadened to exclude all price promotions of HFSS food, to ban meal deals where any element of a meal deal has to be cooked prior to eating, and to extend the regulations’ coverage to all food shops.*

Voluntary ban of some HFSS food price promotions

85. Some supermarkets—notably Tesco and Sainsbury’s—announced their own voluntary ban on the types of volume price promotions that will be covered by the regulations when they come into force. Anna Taylor said that she believed Sainsbury’s had successfully achieved this, while Tesco had not.²³⁸ Rhian Bartlett of Sainsbury’s told the Business and Trade Committee in June 2023 that it was frustrating that the volume price promotion ban had not been brought into force.²³⁹ However, Ms Bartlett acknowledged that Sainsbury’s offered price discounts on single HFSS food items for loyalty card holding customers;²⁴⁰ the same is also true of Tesco. Such promotions would fall outside of the scope of the regulations.

86. We welcome the steps taken by Sainsbury’s and Tesco to voluntarily stop offering volume price promotions on HFSS food, and call on other supermarkets and smaller shops to swiftly follow their lead in the continue absence of legal restrictions to help tackle the widespread problem of unhealthy eating. We challenge all food shops to go further and to stop all promotions of

HFSS food, including single purchase discounts offered to their loyalty scheme holders, and also cook-at-home meal deals such as for pizzas and convenience foods.

Informing consumers to make choices

87. The GFS noted the role of providing consumers with information in order to make healthier food choices, as well as incentivising processors and manufacturers to produce healthier food (as it being more sustainable and ethical).²⁴¹ The British Retail Consortium (BRC) and the Food and Drink Federation (FDF) said that supermarkets and food manufacturers had taken steps including reformulation, nutrition labelling and healthier alternatives that were “all designed to help customers make better choices”.²⁴² This was a theme that the Food Minister picked up on, saying that the Government’s role was “to help and inform people so that they can make the right choices”.²⁴³ He contended that education and better informed consumers would be better than legislation in getting consumers to buy the right foods in order to have a balanced and healthy diet and so reduce the burden on the health service.²⁴⁴

88. However, the Government’s July 2020 Obesity Strategy stated:

Tackling obesity is not just about an individual’s effort, it is also about the environment we live in, the information we are given to make choices; the choices that we are offered; and the influences that shape those choices.²⁴⁵

89. The Food Foundation said policies that place the onus on the individual to make healthier choices “do not work well”,²⁴⁶ citing research by McKinsey Global Institute which found that education and personal responsibility can complement actions to tackle obesity but “in themselves, are not enough”.²⁴⁷ The Food Foundation noted that in the past 30 years, the Government had UK government had published 14 health strategies setting targets for obesity reduction, containing 689 policy recommendations and many of these focused on relying on individuals to change their behaviour, yet rates of obesity and being overweight continued to rise over this period, from 53% of adults in 1993 to 64% in 2019, with a commensurate increase in obesity as noted above.²⁴⁸

90. Better informing consumers about healthy, and unhealthy, food to help them to make the right choices is without doubt an important measure, and we welcome Government steps in this regard. Individuals should take responsibility for their food consumption and make healthier choices where this is possible. However, this alone is not sufficient to tackle the issue of unhealthy eating and obesity, as demonstrated by the fact that 14 previous Government health strategies in the past 30 years have emphasised self-responsibility yet rates of being overweight and obesity have continued to increase. *The Government should set out details—including funding levels—for the next five years for a programme of informing and educating consumers about healthy choices and how these programmes will interact with other policies to tackle obesity and unhealthy eating.*

Annex – Summary of the Shropshire Review relating to labour

- Seasonal workers
 - the replacement of the Seasonal Worker visa scheme pilot is announced by the end of 2023 was “vitaly important”;
 - the new scheme must be guaranteed for a minimum term of five years or until the government is assured domestic seasonal workers can fill the breach;
 - consideration must be given to lifting or removing the cap on the total number of visas.²⁴⁹
- skilled workers
 - it is of “vital importance” that the government widens the eligibility criteria for the Skilled Worker visa route to include roles currently considered lower-skilled or reclassify those occupations so that they become eligible;
 - cutting the high financial costs required to access workers through the Skilled Worker route;
 - more frequent reviews of the Shortage Occupation List (SOL) with more flexibility around which roles are eligible;

- English language requirements must be relaxed although businesses must commit to ensuring workers have passed a secure English language test (SELT) within 12 months of taking up employment;²⁵⁰

Conclusions and recommendations

The importance of food security

1. The UK has demonstrated a resilient food supply during some of the most challenging events in recent times, in particular the covid-19 pandemic, the continuing Russia-Ukraine war and the UK's departure from the EU. The role of the Government and the food supply chain in achieving this resilience should be applauded. However, food security also needs to consider the Government's role in ensuring household level access to healthy and affordable food. (Paragraph 6)

2. The UK Food Security Report (UKFSR) is a vital document to provide transparency about whether the UK will achieve each of the five elements of food security the Government is required to report on, and the associated risks to them. The analysis within the UKFSR should be central to steering Defra and wider Government strategy and policy-making on food security, and therefore should be as up-to-date as possible. Under the provisions of the Agriculture Act 2020, the next edition need not be published until December 2024, but we believe the current edition published in December 2021 is already out-of-date. We are therefore disappointed that the Secretary of State refused to consider publishing an annual UKFSR. (Paragraph 10)

3. While we welcome the Prime Minister's commitment to chair an annual food security summit, we are disappointed that this evolved into May's "Farm to Fork Summit" in which, although successful, food security was not the focus. This was a missed opportunity for the Government to demonstrate its seriousness towards the issue of food security. *The Prime Minister should chair a dedicated food security summit later this year and this should be an annual event, in line with the Prime Minister's promise. Each annual food security summit should, as a minimum, cover the five statutory aspects of food security as set out in the Agriculture Act 2020, with a particular focus on those of most relevance at the time of the summit.* (Paragraph 12)

4. *A fully updated edition of the UK Food Security Report should be published on an annual basis, and a month in advance of the annual food summit. This should be accompanied by an action plan for at least the next 12 months on the steps the Government will take to improve food security. A progress report of the actions taken since the previous year's action plan should be included in the UK Food Security Report.* (Paragraph 13)

Government food policy

5. The final report of the National Food Strategy independent review (NFSIR) offered not only a detailed and considered analysis of the challenges facing our food system, including food security, but also put forward achievable actions. In contrast, the Government Food Strategy (GFS) has fallen short. It is not, as the Food Minister acknowledged, a direct response to the NFSIR as the Government originally proposed in 2019. It is perplexing that given the Government "broadly" accepted the NFSIR's analysis, it did not accept more of its recommendations. The failure to publish a response to each recommendation—despite such an analysis existing within Whitehall—has hindered transparency. (Paragraph 18)

6. *The Government should publish the detailed response to each of the NFSIR's recommendations that it has drawn up within Whitehall as part of its response to this Report.* (Paragraph 19)

7. There is an incoherent approach to food policy across Government. Defra is designated as the Government department responsible for food policy, but 15 other departments and agencies are involved in different elements of development and delivery. The successes of food policy coordination across Whitehall forged during the covid-19 pandemic have not been maintained, and we have concerns that a siloed approach to food policy could hinder the successful implementation of the Government Food Strategy. *Given the importance of food security, and the need for policy coherence and for strong leadership on this issue, we recommend that the Cabinet Office should undertake a comprehensive review of departmental responsibilities and structures regarding food policy and its various facets, and to publish its findings within 12 months of the date of publication of this Report.* (Paragraph 23)

UK food supply

8. The Government Food Strategy (GFS) made only one commitment to food security: to maintain “broadly the same level in future” the UK’s current rate of self-sufficiency of 75% of commodities we can produce. Food security, though, is more than just self-sufficiency: the UK is reliant on food imports, mostly from the EU. *The Government should, in conjunction with the food supply chain and others such as academics, develop a suite of food security indicators covering both inputs and outputs and set targets for them, which should in turn influence food security policy. The Government should outline its approach to this in its Response, and should launch the suite of indicators within 12 months of this Report’s publication.* (Paragraph 29)

Domestic food security: key issues

9. We welcome the report of the Independent Review into Labour Shortages in the Food Supply Chain (the Shropshire Review), and support its recommendations regarding both skilled and seasonal migrant labour. Troublingly, the Shropshire Review has found evidence that the UK’s immigration policy is creating labour shortages that have “seriously impacted the food and farming industry” which it noted “may ultimately threaten food security”.²⁵¹ As we foresaw in our earlier Report on labour, some production has now moved overseas as result of labour shortages, while other businesses are planning to. We also note that the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme does not affect net migration. *It is imperative that the Government listens to the Review’s analysis and constructively considers its recommendations. In doing so, the Government must prioritise the country’s long-term food security ahead of other considerations to ensure the food supply chain has access to sufficient labour, including from overseas, to allow it to realise its growth potential. Failure to do so places at risk the achievement of the Government’s self-sufficiency target and broader food security. The Government must adhere to its stated six-month timeframe to respond to the Independent Review’s report.* (Paragraph 35)

10. Nitrogen fertiliser plays a critical role in UK food security, and the production of ammonia used in it creates large amounts of carbon dioxide gas as a by-product which is vital for the food supply chain. There is only one plant remaining in the UK, which is currently using imported ammonia. This reliance on a single nitrogen fertiliser plant increases the risks to the UK’s food security. The lack of CO₂ by-product has caused UK prices to increase markedly at a time when there are already considerable price pressures on the sector. While we welcome the establishment of the Fertiliser Industry Taskforce, the Government has not set out the steps it will take to protect domestic production of nitrogen fertiliser and ammonia used in it. *Given the importance of nitrogen fertiliser to UK food production and food security, the Government should set out how it will ensure its continued production in the UK, including the resumption of ammonia production to help support CO₂ supplies. Looking ahead, the Government should take steps to support the increased production of nitrogen fertiliser in the UK, and in so doing examine the incentives offered by our competitors. The Government should produce an action plan addressing these points within 6 months of the publication of this Report.* (Paragraph 39)

11. We look forward to the publication of the Government’s Land Use Framework (LUF) for England, and welcome the report of the House of Lords’ Land Use Committee. *The LUF should not be overly prescriptive, but it should make clear what the Government’s priorities are and how it will help the private sector to achieve them. In particular, the LUF should address the current balance of land use between that used for pastoral and animal-feed on the one hand, and horticulture.* (Paragraph 49)

Household food security

12. The Food Minister said that household affordability of, and access to, food does not constitute food security. We disagree. The high and sustained rate of food price inflation means many households are having to take measures to save money like skipping meals. This is happening across all across all socio-economic groups, but is most pronounced in lower socio-economic households. A lack of household food security can lead to physical and mental health consequences for those affected.²⁵² *It is concerning that the Food Minister is not taking households’ ability to access food into account when considering whether this is food security and we recommend that the Government should change its position. If it is unwilling to do, it should lay out its reasons for taking that position in its response to this report.* (Paragraph 56)

13. We applaud the work being done by charities in Liverpool and around the country to support those in need of food aid. In particular, the pantry model of food aid provided a sense of dignity to users, as well as choice, and is something we would encourage other food aid organisations to consider where possible. (Paragraph 61)

14. Higher food inflation and the rise in the cost of living more generally is meaning that food banks are experiencing record levels of demand this year. Earned income, not food banks, are ultimately the solution for household food insecurity. We welcome the substantial support packages, including the index-linked rise in welfare benefits and pensions, that the Government have provided to households which help them to meet their increased bills and therefore have more money to spend on food than otherwise. *The Government should examine whether the totality of support to lower-income households, including from central and local Government and charities, is sufficient to ensure household food security without the need to regularly use food aid organisations and publish its findings within six months of the publication of this Report.* (Paragraph 63)

15. We welcome steps by the Government to expand free school meal (FSM) eligibility. More children are receiving FSM than ever before in England, including all infant school children. However, there is evidence that extending FSM eligibility further could reap substantial benefits that outweigh the costs. *The Government should, as a minimum, undertake a detailed study of the existing literature on the costs and benefits of extending FSM, which should as a minimum include extending FSM (a) for those children living in a Universal Credit claiming household, the impact of (i) raising the means-test to £20,000 post-tax income but before claiming benefits and (ii) removing the means-test and (b) universal provision. The Government should report its findings to the Committee within six months of the date of this report. In the meantime, the Government should urgently undertake a review with a view to increasing the household income threshold criteria for FSM from the current level of £7,400 (after tax and excluding benefits) so that more children living in poverty become eligible. To reduce the costs of extending FSM eligibility, the Government should consider the link between the FSM and the Pupil Premium for those children living in households above a certain income threshold.* (Paragraph 66)

16. *We support the United Nations' Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food's request to undertake a Country Visit to the UK, and call for the Government to facilitate such a visit before the end of this year if Professor Fakhri is available or, if he is not, as soon as possible thereafter. As part of his Country Visit, we invite Professor Fakhri to assess whether a statutory right to food would be appropriate for England and, if so, what this might look like.* (Paragraph 68)

Obesity and access to healthy food

17. The UK is in the midst of an obesity crisis and is facing a situation of around 40% of the adult population being obese by 2035. Unchecked, this will have profound consequences for the NHS. Food that is high in fat, sugar and salt (HFSS) is often considerably cheaper per calorie than healthy food. This helps to explain the paradox that those on low-incomes are more likely to be obese. Indeed, the poorest 20% of households need to spend half their disposable income to eat the Government-recommended healthy diet. The National Food Strategy identified health and food as a vital issue and provided expert analysis, yet the Government Food Strategy did not cover the topic at all or set out any actions to break the junk food cycle. Instead, it passed the buck to the Department for Health and Social Care to include in a White Paper that was first delayed, and then cancelled in favour of the as yet unpublished Major Conditions Strategy. *The Government should respond to the NFSIR's analysis on health and food within six months.* (Paragraph 75)

18. The Government rejected the NFSIR's proposals to break the junk food cycle, including the sugar and salt reformulation tax proposal. While such a tax may cause consumer prices to rise, it may lead consumers to substitute cheaper healthier foods into their shopping basket. *The Government should undertake and publish a full impact assessment of the introduction of a sugar and salt reformulation tax, providing analysis based on different, realistic values of the tax and submit this to the Committee within three months of the publication of this Report.* (Paragraph 78)

19. The Government has set out three actions that could help encourage healthier eating. *On mandatory public reporting against a set of health metrics, this should become a requirement within the next six months. Further research on ultra-processed foods as a contributor to over consumption of higher calorie foods should commence at once and at pace, with the findings reported to the Committee within 12 months of the publication of this Report.* (Paragraph 79)

20. It is regrettable that the introduction of the ban on volume price promotions of food high in fat, sugar and salt (HFSS) has been further delayed to October 2025. The Government said that these delays were necessary to allow it to consider the impact on consumers and businesses in the light of the "unprecedented global economic situation". No justification was provided as to why it will

take over two years to make this assessment. *The Government should set out a detailed timetable for its consideration of how the regulations restricting HFSS food volume price promotions will impact consumers and businesses.* (Paragraph 83)

21. We are not convinced that the delay to banning certain volume price promotions for HFSS food will save consumers money, given the Government's own analysis on this matter. Of less doubt is that it will make the fight against unhealthy eating and obesity even harder. *The Government Response should forecast rates of being overweight and being obese had the HFSS food volume price promotions been introduced in October 2022 compared to their planned introduction of October 2025. The regulations restricting discounts on HFSS food should be broadened to exclude all price promotions of HFSS food, to ban meal deals where any element of a meal deal has to be cooked prior to eating, and to extend the regulations' coverage to all food shops.* (Paragraph 84)

22. We welcome the steps taken by Sainsbury's and Tesco to voluntarily stop offering volume price promotions on HFSS food, and call on other supermarkets and smaller shops to swiftly follow their lead in the continue absence of legal restrictions to help tackle the widespread problem of unhealthy eating. We challenge all food shops to go further and to stop all promotions of HFSS food, including single purchase discounts offered to their loyalty scheme holders, and also cook-at-home meal deals such as for pizzas and convenience foods. (Paragraph 86)

23. Better informing consumers about healthy, and unhealthy, food to help them to make the right choices is without doubt an important measure, and we welcome Government steps in this regard. Individuals should take responsibility for their food consumption and make healthier choices where this is possible. However, this alone is not sufficient to tackle the issue of unhealthy eating and obesity, as demonstrated by the fact that 14 previous Government health strategies in the past 30 years have emphasised self-responsibility yet rates of being overweight and obesity have continued to increase. *The Government should set out details—including funding levels—for the next five years for a programme of informing and educating consumers about healthy choices and how these programmes will interact with other policies to tackle obesity and unhealthy eating.* (Paragraph 90)

Formal minutes

Tuesday 18 July 2023

Members present

Sir Robert Goodwill, in the Chair

Ian Byrne

Barry Gardiner

Dr Neil Hudson

Robbie Moore

Mrs Sheryll Murray

Cat Smith

Julian Sturdy

Derek Thomas

Draft Report (*Food Security*) proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the Chair's draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 90 read and agreed to.

Annex and Summary agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Seventh Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available (Standing Order No. 134).

Adjournment

Adjourned till Tuesday 5 September 2023 at 2.00 p.m.

Witnesses

The following witnesses gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](https://committees.parliament.uk/work/6861/default/publications/oral-evidence/) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/work/6861/default/publications/oral-evidence/>) of the Committee's website.

Tuesday 18 October 2022

Henry Dimpleby MBE, Lead Non-Executive Director and Lead, National Food Strategy, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs [Q1–51 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/10966/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/10966/html/)

Tuesday 8 November 2022

Minette Batters DL, President, National Farmers' Union; **Will Jackson**, Division Director for Engagement and Strategy, Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB); **Ed Barker**, Head of Policy and External Affairs, Agricultural Industries Confederation (AIC) [Q52–98 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11534/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11534/html/)

Andrew Opie, Director of Food and Sustainability, British Retail Consortium (BRC); **James Walton**, Chief Economist, IGD (Institute of Grocery Distribution); **David Thomson**, Director of Strategy and Devolved Nations and CEO FDF Scotland, Food and Drink Federation (FDF) [Q99–145 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11534/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11534/html/)

Tuesday 22 November 2022

Professor Michael Fakhri, UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food, and Professor, University of Oregon School of Law [Q146–169 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11921/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11921/html/)

Lindsay Boswell, Chief Executive Officer, FareShare; **Maria Marshall**, Project Manager, Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN); **Anna Taylor**, Executive Director, The Food Foundation [Q170–230 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11921/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11921/html/)

Tuesday 13 December 2022

Professor Tim Lang, Emeritus Professor of Food Policy, City, University of London; **Dr Kelly Parsons**, Post-doctoral Researcher, MRC Epidemiology Unit, University of Cambridge [Q231–276 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12448/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12448/html/)

Emily Hunter, Lead Policy Advocate on Land Use, Woodland Trust; **Mark Tufnell**, President, Country Land and Business Association (CLA); **Professor Michael Winter**, University of Exeter, Centre for Rural Policy Research [Q277–299 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12448/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12448/html/)

Tuesday 24 January 2023

Rt Hon Mark Spencer MP, Minister for Food, Farming and Fisheries, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; **David Kennedy, CB CBE**, Director General for Food, Biosecurity and Trade, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

[Q300-401 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/)

Published written evidence

The following written evidence was received and can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page \(https://committees.parliament.uk/work/6861/default/publications/written-evidence/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/work/6861/default/publications/written-evidence/) of the Committee's website.

FS numbers are generated by the evidence processing system and so may not be complete.

1 Agricultural Biotechnology Council's (abc) ([FS0084 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112056/default/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112056/default/))

2 Agricultural Industries Confederation ([FS0022 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111868/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111868/html/))

3 Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) ([FS0010 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111819/default/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111819/default/))

4 Agxio Ltd ([FS0042 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111908/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111908/html/))

5 Aquatic Life Institute ([FS0012 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111844/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111844/html/))

6 British Poultry Council ([FS0097 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/118773/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/118773/html/))

7 Arla Foods ([FS0083 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112055/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112055/html/))

8 Associated British Foods ([FS0016 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111860/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111860/html/))

9 Association of Labour Providers ([FS0059 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111939/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111939/html/))

10 Birmingham Food Council CIC ([FS0072 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111962/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111962/html/))

11 British Meat Processors Association ([FS0052 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111926/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111926/html/))

12 British Retail Consortium ([FS0019 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111865/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111865/html/))

13 British Veterinary Association ([FS0069 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111955/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111955/html/))

14 Country Land and Business Association (CLA) ([FS0053 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111927/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111927/html/))

15 Centre for Innovation Excellence in Livestock (CIEL) ([FS0070 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111958/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111958/html/))

16 Chartered Institute of Environmental Health ([FS0049 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111923/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111923/html/))

17 Cheshire and Warrington Leaders' Board; and Cheshire and Warrington LEP ([FS0044 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111910/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111910/html/))

18 Community Planning Alliance ([FS0001 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111133/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111133/html/))

19 CropLife UK ([FS0086 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112058/default/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112058/default/))

- 20 Crustacean Compassion ([FS0054 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111928/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111928/html/))
- 21 Dairy UK ([FS0018 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111864/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111864/html/))
- 22 Davis, Mr Ian; Sam Awdry; Angus Dalton; Anthony Ellis; Brian Jones; Huw Jones; Tom Johnston; Steve North; Karl Starkie; and Richard Tevethan ([FS0028 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111881/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111881/html/))
- 23 Defra ([FS0068 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111954/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111954/html/))
- 24 Dentons ([FS0079 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111983/default/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111983/default/))
- 25 Downlands Action Group ([FS0006 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111732/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111732/html/))
- 26 Dynamic Food Procurement Advisory Board ([FS0074 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111964/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111964/html/))
- 27 Fairtrade Foundation ([FS0036 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111898/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111898/html/))
- 28 FareShare ([FS0101 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/120375/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/120375/html/))
- 29 FareShare ([FS0089 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/113618/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/113618/html/))
- 30 Farmers Union of Wales ([FS0088 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112225/default/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112225/default/))
- 31 Farming Forum Grassroots Group ([FS0029 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111882/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111882/html/))
- 32 Feedback ([FS0025 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111875/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111875/html/))
- 33 Feeding Liverpool ([FS0035 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111896/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111896/html/))
- 34 Fennell, Mr Clive ([FS0003 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111277/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111277/html/))
- 35 Food Active (part of the Health Equalities Group) ([FS0020 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111866/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111866/html/))
- 36 Food Standards Agency (FSA) ([FS0082 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112054/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112054/html/))
- 37 Food and Drink Federation (FDF) ([FS0087 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112189/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112189/html/))
- 38 Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust ([FS0055 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111929/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111929/html/))
- 39 Greater Lincolnshire LEP ([FS0011 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111840/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111840/html/))
- 40 Green Alliance ([FS0078 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111977/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111977/html/))
- 41 Historic England ([FS0081 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112053/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112053/html/))
- 42 Humane Being ([FS0062 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111945/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111945/html/))
- 43 Hybu Cig Cymru - Meat Promotion Wales (HCC) ([FS0080 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112052/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112052/html/))
- 44 IGD (Institute of Grocery Distribution) ([FS0021 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111867/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111867/html/))
- 45 Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN) ([FS0100 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/120373/default/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/120373/default/))
- 46 Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN) ([FS0071 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111961/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111961/html/))

- 47 Lang, Professor Tim and Dr Kelly Parsons ([FS0095](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/116568/html/))
- 48 Lightsource bp ([FS0023](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111870/default/))
- 49 Local Government Association ([FS0066](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111950/html/))
- 50 MSD Animal Health ([FS0026](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111878/html/))
- 51 Mallard Pass Action Group ([FS0058](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111938/html/))
- 52 Mallard Pass Solar Farm ([FS0092](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/114140/html/))
- 53 McCain Foods (GB) Ltd ([FS0056](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111932/html/))
- 54 NFU Scotland ([FS0050](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111924/html/))
- 55 NOAH (National Office of Animal Health Ltd) ([FS0033](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111892/html/))
- 56 National Farmers' Union ([FS0061](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111944/html/))
- 57 National Farmers' Union ([FS0099](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/120372/html/))
- 58 National Federation of Fishermen's Organisations (NFFO) ([FS0017](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111862/html/))
- 59 National Pig Association ([FS0047](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111920/html/))
- 60 National Sheep Association ([FS0030](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111886/html/))
- 61 Natural England ([FS0064](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111948/html/))
- 62 Nature Friendly Farming Network ([FS0037](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111902/html/))
- 63 Nayak, Dr Rounaq; Professor Heather Hartwell; and Dr Jeffery Bray ([FS0008](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111811/html/))
- 64 New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership ([FS0024](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111873/html/))
- 65 Oliver-Bellasis FRAGS, Mr HR
- 66 Parkinson, Mr George ([FS0014](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111854/html/))
- 67 Parsons, Dr Kelly ([FS0093](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/114145/html/))
- 68 Provision Trade Federation ([FS0060](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111942/html/))
- 69 Quality Meat Scotland ([FS0075](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111969/html/))
- 70 Queen's University Belfast ([FS0039](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111905/html/))
- 71 RSPCA ([FS0009](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111816/html/))
- 72 Rare Breeds Survival Trust (RBST) ([FS0077](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111975/html/))

- 73 Read, Malcolm ([FS0096 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/117514/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/117514/html/))
- 74 River Action ([FS0031 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111887/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111887/html/))
- 75 Say No to Sunnica Action Group Ltd ([FS0057 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111934/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111934/html/))
- 76 Scottish Fishermen's Federation ([FS0040 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111906/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111906/html/))
- 77 Small Abattoir Group ([FS0027 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111880/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111880/html/))
- 78 Soil Association ([FS0013 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111852/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111852/html/))
- 79 Solar Energy UK ([FS0065 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111949/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111949/html/))
- 80 St. Clair, Dr Rebecca; Dr Maria Sharmina; and Tess Hayton ([FS0051 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111925/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111925/html/))
- 81 Sturdy, Mrs Emma ([FS0004 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111318/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111318/html/))
- 82 Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming ([FS0043 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111909/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111909/html/))
- 83 Sustainable Food Places ([FS0041 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111907/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111907/html/))
- 84 Sutton, Mr Peter ([FS0002 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111272/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111272/html/))
- 85 Thames Crossing Action Group ([FS0005 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111676/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111676/html/))
- 86 The Food Foundation ([FS0098 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/119590/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/119590/html/))
- 87 The Food Foundation ([FS0076 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111972/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111972/html/))
- 88 The Pesticide Collaboration ([FS0045 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111912/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111912/html/))
- 89 The Trussell Trust ([FS0085 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112057/default/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112057/default/))
- 90 Touboulis, Dr Anne; and Dr Lucy McCarthy ([FS0032 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111891/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111891/html/))
- 91 Transforming UK Food Systems Programme ([FS0063 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111947/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111947/html/))
- 92 UK Fisheries Ltd ([FS0007 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111767/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111767/html/))
- 93 Ward, Professor Neil; Professor Tim Benton; Professor Sarah Bridle; Professor Stefan Kepinski; and Dr Angelina Sanderson Bellamy ([FS0038 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111903/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111903/html/))
- 94 WWF-UK ([FS0067 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111953/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111953/html/))
- 95 Which? ([FS0048 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111921/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111921/html/))
- 96 Wildlife & Countryside Link; RSPB; Soil Association; National Trust; Woodland Trust; The Wildlife Trusts; Friend of the Earth; Humane Society International United Kingdom; Bat Conservation Trust; Angling Trust; The Humane League; Naturewatch; Plantlife; Bumblebee Conservation Trust; Whale & Dolphin Conservation; Rare Breeds Survival Trust ([FS0046 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111919/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111919/html/))

97 Winter, Professor Michael ([FS0094 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/114146/default/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/114146/default/))

98 Woodland Trust ([FS0034 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111895/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111895/html/))

List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

All publications from the Committee are available on the [publications page](#) () of the Committee's website.

Session 2022–23

Number	Title	Reference
1st	Australia FTA: Food and Agriculture	HC 23
2nd	Pre-appointment hearing for the Chair-designate of the Environment Agency	HC 546
3rd	The price of plastic: ending the toll of plastic waste	HC 22
4th	Rural mental health	HC 248
5th	Species Reintroduction	HC 849
6th	Protecting Marine Mammals in the UK and Abroad	HC 697
1st Special	Tree Planting: Government Response to the Committee's Third Report of Session 2021–22	HC 323
2nd Special	Labour shortages in the food and farming sector: Government Response to the Committee's Fourth Report of Session 2021–22	HC 412
3rd Special	Australia FTA: Food and Agriculture: Government Response to the Committee's First Report	HC 700
4th Special	The price of plastic: ending the toll of plastic waste: Government Response to the Committee's Third Report	HC 1044

Session 2021-22

Number	Title	Reference
1st	Moving animals across borders	HC 79
2nd	Environmental Land Management and the agricultural transition	HC 78
3rd	Tree planting	HC 356
4th	Labour shortages in the food and farming sector	HC 713
5th	Pre-appointment Hearing: Chair of Ofwat	HC 1253

Session 2019-21

Number	Title	Reference
1st	COVID-19 and food supply	HC 263
2nd	Pre-appointment hearing for the Chair-Designate of the Office for Environmental Protection (OEP)	HC 1042
3rd	The UK's new immigration policy and the food supply chain	HC 231
4th	Flooding	HC 170
5th	Air Quality and coronavirus: a glimpse of a different future or business as usual	HC 468
6th	Public Sector Procurement of Food	HC 469
7th	Covid-19 and the issues of security in food supply	HC 1156
8th	Seafood and meat exports to the EU	HC 1189

Footnotes

1 Q149 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11922/html/>).

2 National Farmers' Union, Food is part of our national security says former MI5 Director General (<https://www.nfuonline.com/updates-and-information/food-is-part-of-our-national-security-says-former-mi5-director-general/>), 29 November 2022

3 Our inquiries into food security and the pandemic found that food shortages were prompted by the normal balance between food consumption between at home and in the hospitality sector (e.g. restaurants, pubs, cafés) dramatically and rapidly shifting to almost exclusively the household sector in the face of lockdowns and other measures that severely restricted public movement and introduced restrictions on proximity. These severely affected the ability of the hospitality sector to trade normally. In addition, instances of panic buying of some products placed further strain on the supply chain. Furthermore, we found that some groups were particularly affected by access to food issues during the pandemic, especially those who were clinically vulnerable and isolating from the virus, or living in already food insecure households, or both. [Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, First Report of Session 2019–21, COVID-19 and food supply (<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/2187/documents/20156/default/>), HC 263, 30 July 2020; Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, Seventh Report of Session 2019–21, Covid-19 and the issues of security in food supply (<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/5360/documents/53400/default/>), HC 1156, 7 April 2021]

4 The Food Foundation, Food insecurity tracker update: Families continue to face high levels of food insecurity (<https://foodfoundation.org.uk/publication/food-insecurity-tracker-update-families-continue-face-high-levels-food-insecurity>), 23 March 2023, slide 3 of 11

5 Office for National Statistics, Consumer price inflation, UK: May 2023 (<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/bulletins/consumerpriceinflation/may2023>), 21 June 2023

6 One study on the topic identified over 200 definitions of the term “food security” in academic literature [National Food Strategy, The Plan (https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/25585_1669_NFS_The_Plan_July21_S12_New-1.pdf), July 2021, p130].

7 Defra, UK Food Security Report (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1077015/United_Kingdom_Food_Security_Report_2021.pdf), December 2021, p6 and Agriculture Act 2020 section 19 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2020/21/section/19/enacted>)

8 At the time of publication, two other Commons committees have ongoing inquiries on the subject of food security: the Environmental Audit Committee’s “Environmental Change and Food Security” inquiry; and the Science, Innovation and Technology Committee’s “Insect Decline and UK Food Security” inquiry.

9 Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, Food Security: terms of reference (<https://committees.parliament.uk/call-for-evidence/2699/>), accessed 14 July 2023

10 National Protective Security Agency, Critical National Infrastructure (<https://www.npsa.gov.uk/critical-national-infrastructure-0>), accessed on 11 July 2023

11 Defra is the lead Government department on food supply [PQ51874 28 September 2021 (<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-20/51874/>)], although the UKFSR states that “the role of government is an indirect one; to plan for and coordinate responses and intervene only where necessary to ensure the continuity of supply” given that the “underlying infrastructure of the supply chain is owned and operated by private industry” [Defra, United Kingdom Food Security Report 2021: Theme 3: Food Supply Chain Resilience (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/united-kingdom-food-security-report-2021/united-kingdom-food-security-report-2021-theme-3-food-supply-chain-resilience>), updated 22 December 2021]

12 Provision Trade Federation (ES0060 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111942/html/>))

13 Q30 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/>)⁷

14 Q303 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/>)

- 15 EFRA Committee, First Report of Session 2019–2021, COVID-19 and food supply (<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/2187/documents/20156/default/>), HC 263, 30 July 2020, pp44–45, para 116
- 16 Agriculture Act 2020, section 19 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2020/21/section/19/enacted>). The Government noted that the December 2021 UKFSR was the first comprehensive review of the UK’s food security to be published since the UK Food Security Assessment (UKFSA)” in 2009 and updated in 2010 [Defra, UK Food Security Report (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1077015/United_Kingdom_Food_Security_Assessment_December_2021), pp6–7]
- 17 Associated British Foods (FS0016 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111860/html/>))
- 18 Associated British Foods (FS0016 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111860/html/>)); National Food Strategy, The Plan (https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/25585_1669_NFS_The_Plan_July21_S12_New-1.pdf), July 2021, p260; National Farmers Union (FS0061 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111944/html/>))
- 19 Q308 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/>).
- 20 Q343 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/>).
- 21 Oral evidence taken on 28 March 2023, HC (2022–23) 705, Q138 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12949/html/>).
- 22 Oral evidence taken on 28 March 2023, HC (2022–23) 705, Q139 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12949/html/>).
- 23 Ready for Rishi, Rishi Sunak will always back British Farmers (https://www.ready4rishi.com/rishi_sunak_always_back_british_farmers_press_release), press release, 30 July 2022
- 24 Prime Minister’s Office, 10 Downing Street and Defra, An update following the UK Farm to Fork summit held at 10 Downing Street on 16 May 2023 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/outcomes-from-the-uk-farm-to-fork-summit/an-update-following-the-uk-farm-to-fork-summit-held-at-10-downing-street-on-16-may-2023>), 16 May 2023
- 25 Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, Letter from the Secretary of State further to her evidence on 28 March 2023 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/40661/documents/198185/default/>), 20 June 2023, p1
- 26 Defra, Developing a National Food Strategy: independent review 2019 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/developing-a-national-food-strategy-independent-review-2019>), 27 June 2019
- 27 Defra, Developing a National Food Strategy: independent review 2019 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/developing-a-national-food-strategy-independent-review-2019>), 27 June 2019. The issues cited included the increasing global population, increasing resource competition, stresses on water supplies, and climate change, plus the re-emergence of trade barriers and new public health dangers such as anti-microbial resistance to viral mutations.
- 28 Defra, Developing a National Food Strategy: independent review 2019 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/developing-a-national-food-strategy-independent-review-2019>), 27 June 2019
- 29 National Food Strategy, Part One (<https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/NFS-Part-One-SP-CP.pdf>), July 2020, p7
- 30 National Food Strategy, The Plan (https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/25585_1669_NFS_The_Plan_July21_S12_New-1.pdf), July 2021, p10
- 31 National Food Strategy, The Plan (https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/25585_1669_NFS_The_Plan_July21_S12_New-1.pdf), July 2021, p10

32 National Food Strategy, The Plan (https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/25585_1669_NFS_The_Plan_July21_S12_New-1.pdf), July 2021, p12

33 Defra, Government Food Strategy (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1082026/government-food-strategy.pdf), June 2022, p8, para 9

34 Oral evidence taken before the Land Use in England Committee on 22 June 2022, HL (2022–23) 105, Q190 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/10508/html/>).

35 Qq234–235 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12449/html/>).

36 Professor Neil Ward; Professor Tim Benton; Professor Sarah Bridle; Professor Stefan Kepinski; Dr Angelina Sanderson Bellamy (FS0038) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111903/html/>)

37 Q273 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12449/html/>).

38 Q273 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12449/html/>).

39 Qq329–330 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/>).

40 Q232 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12449/html/>).

41 Q273 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12449/html/>).

42 Q333 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/>).

43 Q334 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/>).

44 Qq322 and 334 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/>).

45 Q73 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11535/html/>).

46 Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, Second Special Report of Session 2021–22, COVID-19 and the issues of security in food supply: Government Response to the Committee’s Seventh Report of Session 2019–21 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/6331/documents/69545/default/>), HC 351, 18 June 2021, para 33

47 Q202 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11922/html/>).

48 Q30 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/10966/html/>).

49 Q202 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11922/html/>).

50 Food Research Collaboration, Coordination must be key to how governments respond to Covid-19 food impacts: a view from England (<https://foodresearch.org.uk/download/15024/>), Guidance Note, undated. A diagram showing the various responsibility can be found in evidence submitted to the Committee [Dr Kelly Parsons (FS0093) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/114145/html/>)]. The National Audit Office (NAO) also noted that a number of supporting bodies, as well as local authorities, also had responsibilities relating to food security, including the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB), Rural Payments Agency, Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and UK Health Security Agency [National Audit Office, Government’s role in ensuring food security (<https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/governments-role-in-ensuring-food-security.pdf>)], HC 909 2023–23, 24 November 2022]

51 Food Research Collaboration, How connected is national food policy in England? Mapping cross-government work on food system issues (<https://foodresearch.org.uk/download/15524/>), February 2021

52 Food Research Collaboration, Who makes food policy in England? A map of government actors and activities (https://www.kellyparsons.co.uk/files/ugd/185621_cb74afb269664c2bab6a2e5d0de800b3.pdf), May 2020

53 Q400 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/>).

54 Q400 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/>).

55 Defra, Government Food Strategy. (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1082026/government-food-strategy.pdf), June 2022, p9, para 13

56 Defra, Government Food Strategy. (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1082026/government-food-strategy.pdf), June 2022, p9, para 13

57 Dr Kelly Parsons, University of Cambridge (FS0093 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/114145/html/>))

58 National Food Strategy, The Plan (https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/25585_1669_NFS_The_Plan_July21_S12_New-1.pdf), July 2021, p130

59 HC Deb 23 February 2023 c313 (<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-02-23/debates/0814D2CD-836D-4906-BC69-F0F28C047C50/UKFoodShortages>).

60 It should be noted that the figure of 75% is based only on indigenous type food that can be grown commercially in the UK, which is a subset of all food consumed. When considering the broader measure of total food consumed, including imported food that cannot be produced in the UK, the self-sufficiency figure falls to 60%. However, these two measures of self-sufficiency have largely moved in lockstep since the 1960s as figure 14.3 in Defra's "Agriculture in the UK 2022" report shows. Given some UK food is exported, this figure falls to 54% which the UKFSR described as the "actual consumption" figure [Defra, UK Food Security Report 2021 (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1077015/United_Kingdom_Food_S December 2021, p87; Defra, Agriculture in the UK 2022 (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1169229/auk-2022-13jul23.pdf), 13 July 2023, figure 14.3]

61 More formally, the self-sufficiency ratio is the "food production to supply" ratio, and is calculated as the farmgate value of raw food production divided by the value of raw food for human consumption [Defra, Agriculture in the United Kingdom 2021 (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1094493/Agriculture-in-the-UK-27jul22.pdf), July 2022, p168]

62 Defra (FS0068 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111954/html/>))

63 Q85 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11535/html/>).

64 Q81 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11535/html/>).

65 CLA (FS0053 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111927/html/>))

66 Dairy UK (FS0018 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111864/html/>)) para 22

67 Agricultural Industries Confederation (FS0022 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111868/html/>))

68 Defra, [Agriculture in the UK 2022](#)

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1169229/aug-2022-13jul23.pdf), 13 July 2023, p193, table 14.2

69 Q261 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12449/html/>)

70 Q89 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11535/html/>)

71 Defra, [UK Food Security Report 2021](#)

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1077015/United_Kingdom_Food_Security_Report_2021.pdf), December 2021, p84

72 Q259 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12449/html/>)

73 Q265 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12449/html/>)

74 Professor Tim Lang and Dr Kelly Parsons (FS0095 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/116568/html/>))

75 National Farmers' Union (FS0061 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111944/html/>))

76 Q155 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11922/html/>)

77 Greater Lincolnshire LEP Food Board (FS0011 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111840/html/>))

78 RSPCA (FS0009 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111816/html/>)) para 2

79 RSPCA (FS0009 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111816/html/>)) para 2

80 British Veterinary Association (FS0069 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111955/html/>))

81 Defra, [UK Food Security Report 2021](#)

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1077015/United_Kingdom_Food_Security_Report_2021.pdf), December 2021, p83

82 Association of Labour Providers (FS0059 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111939/html/>))

83 Q77 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11535/html/>); see also Norfolk & Suffolk Agri-Food Industry Council (FS0024 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111873/html/>))

84 Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, [The UK's new immigration policy and the food supply chain](#)

(<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/4112/documents/40735/default/>), HC 231 2019–2021, 22 December 2020; Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, [Labour shortages in the food and farming sector](#) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/9580/documents/162177/default/>), HC 713 2021–2022, 6 April 2022

85 Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, Third Report of Session 2019–21, [The UK's new immigration policy and the food supply chain](#) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/4112/documents/40735/default/>), HC 231, 22 December 2020, p3

86 EFRA Committee, [Labour shortages in the food and farming sector: Government Response to the Committee's Fourth Report of Session 2021–22](#) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/22775/documents/167354/default/>), HC 412 2022–23, 23 June 2022, p8

87 Oral evidence taken on 14 December 2021, HC (2021–22) 713, Q355 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/3206/html/>)

88 National Farmers' Union (FS0061 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111944/html/>))

89 Independent Review into Labour Shortages in the Food Supply Chain, Report

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1166600/Independent_Review_int
June 2023, pp32–33, paras 85 and 87)

90 Independent Review into Labour Shortages in the Food Supply Chain, Report

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1166600/Independent_Review_int
June 2023, p32, para 85)

91 Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, Third Report of Session 2019–21, [The UK's new immigration policy and the food supply chain](#) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/4112/documents/40735/default/>), HC 231, 22 December 2020, p26, para 61

92 Independent Review into Labour Shortages in the Food Supply Chain, Report

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1166600/Independent_Review_int
June 2023, p32, para 86)

93 The Shropshire Review noted that “access to EU workers is not only a concern for the UK but also for all European countries due to the fast-growing economies in Central Europe, who themselves are now in a position of having to recruit non-EU workers”. Romania, for example, had “recently announced a scheme to recruit non-EU workers to fill labour shortages in their food and farming industries”

[Independent Review into Labour Shortages in the Food Supply Chain, Report

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1166600/Independent_Review_int
June 2023, p13, paras 18–19]

94 Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, Third Report of Session 2019–21, [The UK's new immigration policy and the food supply chain](#) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/4112/documents/40735/default/>), HC 231, 22 December 2020; Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, Fourth Report of Session 2021–22, [Labour shortages in the food and farming sector](#) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/9580/documents/162177/default/>), HC 713, 6 April 2022

95 Independent Review into Labour Shortages in the Food Supply Chain, Report

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1166600/Independent_Review_int
June 2023, p32, para 86)

96 Defra, [UK Food Security Report 2021](#)

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1077015/United_Kingdom_Food_S
December 2021, p83)

97 Defra, [The British Survey of Fertiliser Practice: Fertiliser use on farm crops for crop year 2021](#)

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1094283/fertiliseruse-annualreport2021-28jul22.pdf), p ix table ES1, p13 table B1.1, and p17 table B1.3a)

98 Agricultural Industries Confederation (FS0022 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111868/html/>))

99 Q345 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/>)

100 Defra, [Farming Blog: Adjusting fertiliser application rates to reduce costs](#) (<https://defrafarming.blog.gov.uk/2022/05/11/adjusting-fertiliser-application-rates-to-reduce-costs/>), 11 May 2022; and Defra (FS0068 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111954/html/>))

101 Agricultural Industries Confederation (FS0022 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111868/html/>))

102 McCain Foods (GB) Ltd (FS0056 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111932/html/>))

103 Q347 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/>).

104 Defra, Government secures agreement to ensure CO2 supplies (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-secures-agreement-to-ensure-co2-supplies>), press release, 21 September 2021

105 Defra, Letter from the Minister of State for Food, Farming and Fisheries to the Chair of the EFRA Committee (<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/33597/documents/182888/default/>), 16 January 2023, p1

106 Norfolk & Suffolk Agri-Food Industry Council (FS0024 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111873/html/>))

107 British Meat Processors Association (FS0052 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111926/html/>))

108 When CF Fertilisers temporarily closed both its UK plants in September 2021, the Government provided “limited financial support” for three weeks until CO2 users agreed a price deal [Defra, Government secures agreement to ensure CO2 supplies (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-secures-agreement-to-ensure-co2-supplies>), press release, 21 September 2021; and Defra, Agreement reached to ensure supplies of CO2 to businesses (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/agreement-reached-to-ensure-supplies-of-co2-to-businesses>), press release, 11 October 2021]

109 Defra, Letter from the Minister of State for Food, Farming and Fisheries to the Chair of the EFRA Committee (<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/33597/documents/182888/default/>), 16 January 2023, p1

110 Defra, UK Food Security Report 2021 (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1077015/United_Kingdom_Food_Security_Report_2021.pdf), December 2021, p83

111 Defra, UK Food Security Report 2021 (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1077015/United_Kingdom_Food_Security_Report_2021.pdf), December 2021, p130

112 National Food Strategy, The Plan (https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/25585_1669_NFS_The_Plan_July21_S12_New-1.pdf), July 2021, p109

113 National Food Strategy, The Plan (https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/25585_1669_NFS_The_Plan_July21_S12_New-1.pdf), July 2021, p110, figure 11.2

114 Namely, reducing food waste by 50% and boosting farm yields by 15%.

115 National Food Strategy, The Plan (https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/25585_1669_NFS_The_Plan_July21_S12_New-1.pdf), July 2021, p109

116 National Food Strategy, The Plan (https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/25585_1669_NFS_The_Plan_July21_S12_New-1.pdf), July 2021, p117

117 Oral evidence taken before the Land Use in England Committee on 22 June 2022, HL (2022-23) 105, Q198 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/10508/html/>).

118 “Ministers ‘run scared’ of targeting meat consumption in land use strategy” (<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/jan/05/ministers-run-scared-of-targeting-meat-consumption-in-land-use-strategy>), The Guardian, 5 January 2023

119 Q399 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/>).

[120 Q399](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/>),

[121 Q294](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12449/html/) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12449/html/>),

[122 British Retail Consortium \(FS0019\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111865/html/) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111865/html/>)) para 6.6

[123 Q338](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/>),

[124 Q338](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/>),

[125 Q261](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12449/html/) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12449/html/>),

[126 Defra \(FS0068\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111954/html/) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111954/html/>) and Defra, [Government Food Strategy](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1082026/government-food-strategy.pdf), (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1082026/government-food-strategy.pdf), June 2022, p17, para 1.3.3

[127 HL3858 30 January 2023](https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-11-29/HL3858) (<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-11-29/HL3858>),

[128 HL7589 17 May 2023](https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-05-02/HL7589) (<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-05-02/HL7589>),

[129 Defra, Government Food Strategy](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1082026/government-food-strategy.pdf), (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1082026/government-food-strategy.pdf), June 2022, p15, para 1.2.3

[130 HL8474 26 June 2023](https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-06-14/HL8474) (<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-06-14/HL8474>),

[131 Q93](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11535/html/) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11535/html/>),

[132 Q281](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12449/html/) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12449/html/>),

[133 CLA \(FS0053\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111927/html/) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111927/html/>)

[134 Q281 \(Professor Michael Winter\), Q283 \(Emily Hunter\), Q289 \(Mark Hunter\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12449/html/), (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12449/html/>),

[135 Defra \(FS0068\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111954/html/) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111954/html/>)

[136 Q390](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/>),

[137 Land Use in England Committee, Report of Session 2022–23, Making the most out of England's land](https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/33168/documents/179645/default/) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/33168/documents/179645/default/>), HL 105, 13 December 2022

[138 Land Use in England Committee, England needs a Land Use Framework, says Lords Committee](https://committees.parliament.uk/work/6479/land-use-in-england/news/175072/england-needs-a-land-use-framework-says-lords-committee/) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/work/6479/land-use-in-england/news/175072/england-needs-a-land-use-framework-says-lords-committee/>), 13 December 2022; see also Land Use in England Committee, Report of 2022–23, [Making the most out of England's land](https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/33168/documents/179645/default/) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/33168/documents/179645/default/>), HL105, 13 December 2022

[139 National Pig Association \(FS0047\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111920/html/) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111920/html/>)

[140 Agricultural Industries Confederation \(FS0022\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111868/html/) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111868/html/>)

[141 Office for National Statistics, Consumer price inflation, UK: May 2023](https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/bulletins/consumerpriceinflation/may2023) (<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/bulletins/consumerpriceinflation/may2023>), 21 June 2023

142 Bank of England, Monetary Policy Report (<https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/-/media/boe/files/monetary-policy-report/2023/may/monetary-policy-report-may-2023.pdf>), May 2023, p7; IGD (Institute of Grocery Distribution) (FS0021 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111867/html/>))

143 Food Active (part of the Health Equalities Group) (FS0020 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111866/html/>))

144 Bank of England, Monetary Policy Report (<https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/-/media/boe/files/monetary-policy-report/2023/may/monetary-policy-report-may-2023.pdf>), May 2023, p21

145 British Retail Consortium (FS0019 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111865/html/>)) para 3.5

146 Food Standards Agency (FSA) (FS0082 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112054/html/>))

147 Defra (FS0068 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111954/html/>))

148 <https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12949/html/> (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12949/html/>), Q131

149 Oral evidence taken before the Business and Trade Committee on 27 June 2023, HC (2022-23) 1595, Q53 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/13392/html/>).

150 Oral evidence taken before the Business and Trade Committee on 27 June 2023, HC (2022-23) 1595, Q53 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/13392/html/>).

151 J Sainsbury plc, Preliminary Results for the 52 weeks ended 4 March 2023 (https://www.about.sainsburys.co.uk/-/media/Files/S/Sainsburys/documents/reports-and-presentations/2023/Preliminary_Results_22-23/J%20Sainsbury%20plc%20Preliminary%20Results%202223%20Statement.pdf), 27 April 2023; Tesco plc, Preliminary Results 2022/23 (<https://www.tescopl.com/media/1ihb5i4l/tesco-plc-preliminary-results-2223-press-release.pdf>), 13 April 2023

152 Oral evidence taken before the Business and Trade Committee on 27 June 2023, HC (2022-23) 1595, Q86 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/13392/html/>).

153 British Retail Consortium (FS0019 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111865/html/>)); see also Greater Lincolnshire LEP Food Board (FS0011 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111840/html/>))

154 Oral evidence taken before the Business and Trade Committee on 27 June 2023, HC (2022-23) 1595, Q51 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/13392/html/>).

155 IGD (Institute of Grocery Distribution) (FS0021 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111867/html/>))

156 The Trussell Trust (FS0085 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112057/default/>)) para 2

157 Qq301-318 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/>).

158 Food Standards Agency (FSA) (FS0082 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112054/html/>))

159 Independent Food Aid Network, IFAN Survey April 2023 (https://www.foodaidnetwork.org.uk/files/ugd/81e3d7_c2ef6b7c60624edb826441a02a7f4624.pdf), 16 May 2023, p5

160 Trussell Trust, Emergency food parcel distribution in the UK: April 2022 – March 2023 (<https://www.trusselltrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/04/EYS-UK-Factsheet-2022-23.pdf>), [date], pp2-3

161 Trussell Trust, Emergency food parcel distribution in the UK: April 2022 – March 2023 (<https://www.trusselltrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/04/EYS-UK-Factsheet-2022-23.pdf>), [date], pp2–3 and 7

162 Sustainable Food Places (FS0041 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111907/html/>))

163 Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN) (FS0071 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111961/html/>))

164 The Trussell Trust (FS0085 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112057/default/>))

165 Local Government Association (FS0066 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111950/html/>)); see also Sustainable Food Places (FS0041 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111907/html/>)), Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN) (FS0071 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111961/html/>)) and The Trussell Trust (FS0085 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112057/default/>))

166 National Food Strategy, The Plan (https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/25585_1669_NFS_The_Plan_July21_S12_New-1.pdf), July 2021, p63

167 Qq318 and 369 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/>).

168 In addition, third party organisations would also be present at the Pantry that offered services to customers, such as JobCentre Plus, local NHS service providers, and organisations offering advice on matters such as rent.

169 Defra (FS0068 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111954/html/>))

170 HM Treasury, Cost of living support Factsheet (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/autumn-statement-2022-cost-of-living-support-factsheet/cost-of-living-support-factsheet>), updated 21 November 2022

171 Local Government Association (FS0066 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111950/html/>))

172 Child Poverty Action Group, 800,000 Children in poverty not getting free school (<https://cpag.org.uk/news-blogs/news-listings/800000-children-poverty-not-getting-free-school-meals>), 9 June 2022

173 Food Active (part of the Health Equalities Group) (FS0020 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111866/html/>))

174 Local Government Association (FS0066 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111950/html/>)) para 4.4

175 National Food Strategy, Part One (<https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/NFS-Part-One-SP-CP.pdf>), July 2020, p9

176 For children whose FSM eligibility is determined by the means-test applied to the family, this is currently set at annual household income of less than £7,400 before benefits. The Government equates this to an overall household income of between £18,000 and £24,000 once benefits income are considered. The NFSIR commented the threshold meant families have to be “extremely poor to qualify” [National Food Strategy, The Plan (https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/25585_1669_NFS_The_Plan_July21_S12_New-1.pdf), July 2021, p151

177 National Food Strategy, The Plan (https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/25585_1669_NFS_The_Plan_July21_S12_New-1.pdf), July 2021, p151. The figure of £544 million also includes the cost of extending FSM to children whose families had No Resource to Public Funds (NRPF), which the Government has now implemented.

178 Q32 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/10966/html/>).

179 PQ65673 25 October 2022 (<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-10-18/65673>).

180 The Pupil Premium is additional funding for schools intended to improve education outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Pupils who are eligible for free school meals, or have been eligible in the past 6 years, are eligible for a Pupil Payment payment to their school [House of Commons Library, School Meals and Nutritional Standards (England) (<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN04195/SN04195.pdf>), 23 February 2023, p16]. The Pupil Premium funding rates for children eligible under the FSM-criteria are currently £1,455 for primary school aged-children, and £1,035 for secondary school-aged children [Department for Education, Pupil premium: overview, 14 April 2023]

181 Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Letter from the Minister for Food, Farming and Fisheries to the Chair of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee (<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/34525/documents/190044/default/>), 15 March 2023

182 The GFS noted a number of steps the Government had recently taken in regard to extending eligibility for FSM, including introducing universal FSM for all infants in state-funded schools (i.e. Key Stage 1), and those children whose family has No Recourse to Public Funds status. [Local Government Association (FS0066 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111950/html/>)) para 4.18]

183 Q373 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/>).

184 Impact on Urban Health, Investing in Children's Future: A Cost Benefit Analysis of Free School Meal Provision Expansion (<https://urbanhealth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/FSM-Full-Report.pdf>) - Final Report, October 2022, pp9-12

185 Q149 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11922/html/>).

186 Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, COVID-19 and food supply: Government Response to the Committee's First Report (<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/2925/documents/28142/default/>), HC 841 2019-21, 10 October 2020, p11

187 Q146 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11922/html/>).

188 Q150 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11922/html/>).

189 PQ173113 4 April 2023 (<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-24/173113>).

190 National Food Strategy, The Plan (https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/25585_1669_NFS_The_Plan_July21_S12_New-1.pdf), July 2021, Figure 1.15

191 Department of Health and Social Care, Tackling obesity: empowering adults and children to live healthier lives (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-obesity-government-strategy/tackling-obesity-empowering-adults-and-children-to-live-healthier-lives>), 27 July 2020, section 1

192 Department of Health and Social Care, Tackling obesity: empowering adults and children to live healthier lives (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-obesity-government-strategy/tackling-obesity-empowering-adults-and-children-to-live-healthier-lives>), 27 July 2020, section 1

193 National Food Strategy, The Plan (https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/25585_1669_NFS_The_Plan_July21_S12_New-1.pdf), July 2021, p25

194 Explanatory Memorandum to the Food (Promotion and Placement) (England) Regulations 2021 (SI 2021/1368) (https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2021/1368/pdfs/uksiem_20211368_en.pdf), p8, para 12.3

195 Q251 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12449/html/>).

196 Food Active (part of the Health Equalities Group) ([FS0020 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111866/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111866/html/))

197 Q11 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/10966/html/>).

198 Food Active (part of the Health Equalities Group) ([FS0020 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111866/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111866/html/))

199 Food Foundation, The Broken Plate 2023: The State of the Nation's Food System (https://www.foodfoundation.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-06/TFF_The%20Broken%20Plate%202023_DigitalFINAL_1.pdf), June 2023, p8

200 Food Foundation, The Broken Plate 2022: The State of the Nation's Food System (https://foodfoundation.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-01/FF_Broken_Plate_Report%202022_DIGITAL_UPDATED_2023.pdf), July 2022, p8

201 Food Foundation, The Broken Plate 2023: The State of the Nation's Food System (https://www.foodfoundation.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-06/TFF_The%20Broken%20Plate%202023_DigitalFINAL_1.pdf), June 2023, p8

202 National Food Strategy, The Plan (https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/25585_1669_NFS_The_Plan_July21_S12_New-1.pdf), July 2021, p

203 Academic research has found that a lack of skills prevented some people from turning raw products, and also observed that there was a lack of knowledge by most consumers about where their food comes from [Dr Anne Touboulic (Associate Professor in Operations Management at University of Nottingham); Dr Lucy McCarthy (Senior Lecturer at University of Bristol) ([FS0032 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111891/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111891/html/))].

204 Defra, Government Food Strategy (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1082026/government-food-strategy.pdf), June 2022, p22, para 2.1.6

205 National Food Strategy, The Plan (https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/25585_1669_NFS_The_Plan_July21_S12_New-1.pdf), July 2021, p49

206 House of Commons Library, Advertising to Children (<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8198/CBP-8198.pdf>), 4 July 2023, section 8

207 Q8 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/10966/html/>).

208 Q6 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/10966/html/>).

209 "Food tsar quits in protest at failure to tackle obesity" (<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/food-tsar-quits-in-protest-at-failure-to-tackle-obesity-b8gg9jn8d>), *Sunday Times*, 19 March 2023

210 Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming ([FS0043 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111909/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111909/html/)) para 30; Food Active (part of the Health Equalities Group) ([FS0020 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111866/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111866/html/)); British Retail Consortium ([FS0019 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111865/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111865/html/)) para 4.5; Local Government Association ([FS0066 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111950/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111950/html/)) paras 5.2 and 5.4

211 Q274 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12449/html/>).

212 HCWS591 4 February 2022 (<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2022-02-04/debates/22020420000007/HealthDisparities>)

213 HC Deb 26 April 2022 c276WH (<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2022-04-26/debates/77644B86-5AEC-4B96-AEFD-B62D29FC973D/NationalStrategyForSelf-Care#contribution-0F05EBEF-9282-48FE-B899-F8FF27CCA2C1>),

214 PQ128715 26 January 2023 (<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-20/128715>),

215 PQ128715 26 January 2023 (<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-20/128715>),

216 Department for Health and Social Care, Major conditions strategy: call for evidence (<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/major-conditions-strategy-call-for-evidence/major-conditions-strategy-call-for-evidence#:~:text=The%20strategy%20will%20set%20out,disadvantage%20in%20their%20local%20areas>), updated 31 May 2023

217 PQ128715 26 January 2023 (<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-20/128715>),

218 National Food Strategy, The Plan (https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/25585_1669_NFS_The_Plan_July21_S12_New-1.pdf), July 2021, p10

219 National Food Strategy, The Plan (https://www.nationalfoodstrategy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/25585_1669_NFS_The_Plan_July21_S12_New-1.pdf), July 2021, p144

220 The GFS did not provide a recommendation-by-recommendation response to the NFSIR, as noted in Chapter 3.

221 PQ 181434 25 April 2023 (<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-04-18/181434>) (sugar and salt tax); PQ 147016 24 February 2023 (<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-02-17/147016>) (“Eat and Learn” initiative)

222 PQ 181434 25 April 2023 (<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-04-18/181434>)

223 Q8 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/10966/html/>),

224 Defra, Government Food Strategy (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1082026/government-food-strategy.pdf), June 2022, p22, para 2.1.8

225 Defra (FS0068 (<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111954/html/>)); Defra, Government Food Strategy (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1082026/government-food-strategy.pdf), June 2022, pp23–24, para 2.2.2

226 SI 2021/1368 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2021/1368/contents/made>),

227 “UK government delays junk-food TV advertisement ban once again” (<https://www.just-food.com/news/uk-government-delays-junk-food-tv-advertisement-ban-once-again/>), Just Food, 9 December 2022

228 Department of Health and Social Care, Government delays restrictions on multibuy deals and advertising on TV and online (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-delays-restrictions-on-multibuy-deals-and-advertising-on-tv-and-online>), 14 May 2022

229 Prime Minister’s Office, 10 Downing Street, PM backs public’s right to choose with delay to BOGOF restrictions (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-backs-publics-right-to-choose-with-delay-to-bogof-restrictions>), 17 June 2023

230 “Meal deals”—where two or more items bought together reduce the overall price — were specifically excluded from the regulations even though both ready-to-eat and cook-at-home meal deals can often include HFSS food. The Government explained that “meal deals” are “generally targeted” as same-day lunch options for adults rather than to “stockpile” at home, so it was decided not

to include them within the scope of the regulations [[PQ 191598 4 July 2023 \(https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-06-28/191598\)](https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-06-28/191598)]. However, there is evidence that some meal deals involve cook at home items intended to be consumed together that are very high in fat, sugar and salt. Meal deals offering HFSS food, often intended to be consumed alongside one another, for a significantly reduced price.

[231 Explanatory Memorandum to the Food \(Promotion and Placement\) \(England\) Regulations 2021 \(SI 2021/1368\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2021/1368/pdfs/uksem_20211368_en.pdf) (https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2021/1368/pdfs/uksem_20211368_en.pdf), p8, para 12.3

[232 Explanatory Memorandum to the Food \(Promotion and Placement\) \(England\) Regulations 2021 \(SI 2021/1368\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2021/1368/pdfs/uksem_20211368_en.pdf) (https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2021/1368/pdfs/uksem_20211368_en.pdf).

[233 The Food Foundation \(FS0076 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111972/html/\)\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111972/html/)

[234 Q195 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11922/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11922/html/).

[235 Q8 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/10966/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/10966/html/).

[236 Prime Minister's Office, 10 Downing Street, PM backs public's right to choose with delay to BOGOF restrictions](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-backs-publics-right-to-choose-with-delay-to-bogof-restrictions) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-backs-publics-right-to-choose-with-delay-to-bogof-restrictions>), 17 June 2023

[237 Qq383 and 385 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/).

[238 Q195 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11922/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11922/html/).

[239 Oral evidence taken before the Business and Trade Committee on 27 June 2023, HC \(2022-23\) 1595, Q72](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/13392/html/) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/13392/html/>).

[240 Oral evidence taken before the Business and Trade Committee on 27 June 2023, HC \(2022-23\) 1595, Q73](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/13392/html/) (<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/13392/html/>).

[241 Defra, Government Food Strategy](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1082026/government-food-strategy.pdf) (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1082026/government-food-strategy.pdf), June 2022, p11

[242 British Retail Consortium \(FS0019 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111865/html/\)\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111865/html/) para 4.5; Food and Drink Federation (FDF) ([FS0087 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112189/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112189/html/))

[243 Q384 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/).

[244 Q380 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12564/html/).

[245 Department of Health and Social Care, Tackling obesity: empowering adults and children to live healthier lives](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-obesity-government-strategy/tackling-obesity-empowering-adults-and-children-to-live-healthier-lives) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-obesity-government-strategy/tackling-obesity-empowering-adults-and-children-to-live-healthier-lives>), 27 July 2020, section 4

[246 The Food Foundation \(FS0076 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111972/html/\)\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111972/html/)

[247 McKinsey Global Institute, Overcoming obesity: An initial economic analysis](https://www.mckinsey.com/-/media/mckinsey/business%20functions/economic%20studies%20temp/our%20insights/how%20the%20) (<https://www.mckinsey.com/-/media/mckinsey/business%20functions/economic%20studies%20temp/our%20insights/how%20the%20> November 2014, p37

[248 The Food Foundation \(FS0076 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111972/html/\)\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/111972/html/)

249 Independent Review into Labour Shortages in the Food Supply Chain, Report

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1166600/Independent_Review_int
June 2023, pp18–20

250 Independent Review into Labour Shortages in the Food Supply Chain, Report

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1166600/Independent_Review_int
June 2023, pp18–20

251 Independent Review into Labour Shortages in the Food Supply Chain, Report

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1166600/Independent_Review_int
June 2023, p32, para 86

252 Food Standards Agency (FSA) ([FS0082 \(https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112054/html/\)](https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112054/html/))

© UK Parliament

[Cookie policy \(https://www.parliament.uk/site-information/privacy/\)](https://www.parliament.uk/site-information/privacy/)

[Site information \(https://www.parliament.uk/site-information/\)](https://www.parliament.uk/site-information/)

[Accessibility statement \(https://www.parliament.uk/site-information/accessibility/\)](https://www.parliament.uk/site-information/accessibility/)