



From Professor Susan Jebb
FSA Chair

Email: efracom@parliament.uk

Our Ref: MC2025/00288

19 June 2025

Dear Alistair

Today, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and Food Standards Scotland (FSS) laid Our Food 2024 in all four legislatures. This is the fourth of our annual reports on food standards, and I enclose a copy with this letter.

We will be publicising the report as part of our Parliamentary reception on 2 July, and you will have received an invitation via your parliamentary office. I would be delighted if you could drop in and hear more about our work and discuss how we can work together to uphold the high food standards in the UK which we all value so much.

The report reviews data from 2024 to consider whether our food is fundamentally safe and what it claims to be, with a view to protecting the consumer interest. We draw on a range of evidence including local authority data, official government statistics, compliance returns from import checks, and the FSA and FSS's own research and surveillance activity. Our focus is on regulatory standards, reflecting our remit, but our analysis has implications across the food system.

The good news is that the evidence suggests that food standards in the UK have remained stable over the last year. We do, however, warn of risks to the resilience of our food system: one in five households are still experiencing food insecurity – that is, they are finding it difficult to access affordable, nutritious food for their families and this hampers progress towards healthier diets.

Local authorities are continuing to struggle with resource pressures, with many facing substantial inspection backlogs for food businesses. These resourcing pressures are also impacting on the level of food sampling taking place, which is a particular concern for people with allergies. Recruitment of Official Veterinarians has improved, following a post-Brexit decline, but there's still work to do to make that supply of vets a sustainable one to protect the meat industry.

The issues we've highlighted in our report represent opportunities to build a more resilient, innovative, and safer food system for the UK, one which protects consumers while supporting business growth. We look forward to working across government as part of a joined-up and systems-wide approach for the Government's planned food strategy.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to discuss this report, or any aspect of the work of the FSA.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Susan', with a stylized, cursive script.

Professor Susan Jebb OBE, PhD, FRCP (Hon), FMedSci