



Protecting Scotland in a changing food environment

Food Standards Scotland Strategy
for 2021–2026

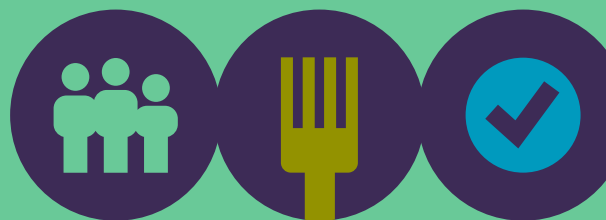


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1. Our Role and Vision as Scotland's food body

Food Standards Scotland was established on the 1 April 2015 as the new public sector food body for Scotland, to protect the health and wellbeing of consumers through three objectives set under the Food (Scotland) Act 2015. FSS has a unique role in government, working independently of Ministers and industry, to provide advice which is impartial, and based on robust science and data.

Our remit covers the whole food chain. This includes the food we consume as well as animal feed, which can impact on public health as well as animal health and welfare.

Our first Strategic Plan, published in 2016, was titled 'Shaping Scotland's Food Future', and set out how we would deliver our statutory functions as the new food body for Scotland. During our first five years, we delivered an extensive programme of work to strengthen the systems which are in place to protect the food and animal feed chain, improve the Scottish diet and develop the evidence base and capabilities needed to support the food interests of Scotland into the future.

FSS's statutory functions are described in the diagram below, and these will continue to underpin all of the work we will do as we take forward our new strategy for 2021 – 26.

Whilst our statutory functions haven't changed, we have broadened our overarching vision and mission statement to reflect what we have learned about the needs and interests of Scottish consumers, and the challenges faced by the food and animal feed sectors and those who are responsible for protecting it. Building our evidence base to take account of the social, ethical and environmental factors that influence our food system, and ensuring we understand the issues that matter most to the people of Scotland will become increasingly important as we face the challenges of a changing food future.





Our vision

A safe, healthy and sustainable food environment that benefits and protects the health and wellbeing of everyone in Scotland.



To protect the public from risks to health which may arise in connection with the consumption of food

- We develop policy on food safety and standards and advise Scottish Minister on risks to the food chain.
- We use science to identify the main causes of foodborne illness in Scotland and strategies for protecting consumers from food safety risks.
- We work with Local Authorities to implement the legislative requirements which ensure the safety and standards of food and animal feed in Scotland.
- In doing so, we support Scottish Ministers in executing the devolved powers which govern the food and feed chain and safeguard public health.



To improve the extent to which members of the public have diets which are conducive to good health

- We monitor the diet of the Scottish population, using data on food purchasing and consumption to assess how it compared to dietary goals and the impact of policy.
- We provide expert, evidence based advice and work with partners to influence policies aimed at improving the Scottish diet and the food environment, helping people to achieve a healthier diet and healthy weight and reduce the levels of diet related disease.



To protect the other interests of consumers in relation to food

- We make sure food is labelled and described accurately so that consumers are able to make informed choices about what they buy.
- We work with Local Authorities, the police and other enforcement bodies to tackle food crime, and develop strategies for preventing fraud and other criminal activity across the food and animal feed chain.
- We engage with the Scottish public to understand the cultural, political and environmental factors that influence their interests and concerns about the food chain.

2. A New Strategy:

Delivering our ambition for the future

Our ambition is to build on the achievements of our first five years, aligning all of our work to a set of core values and guiding principles that will help us to deliver the five key outcomes which underpin our vision and contribute to the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework. This strategy describes how these values and guiding principles will frame our work over the next five years, in the context of an evolving food and health landscape.

FSS Outcomes for 2021–2026



Food is Safe and Authentic



Consumers Have Healthier Diets



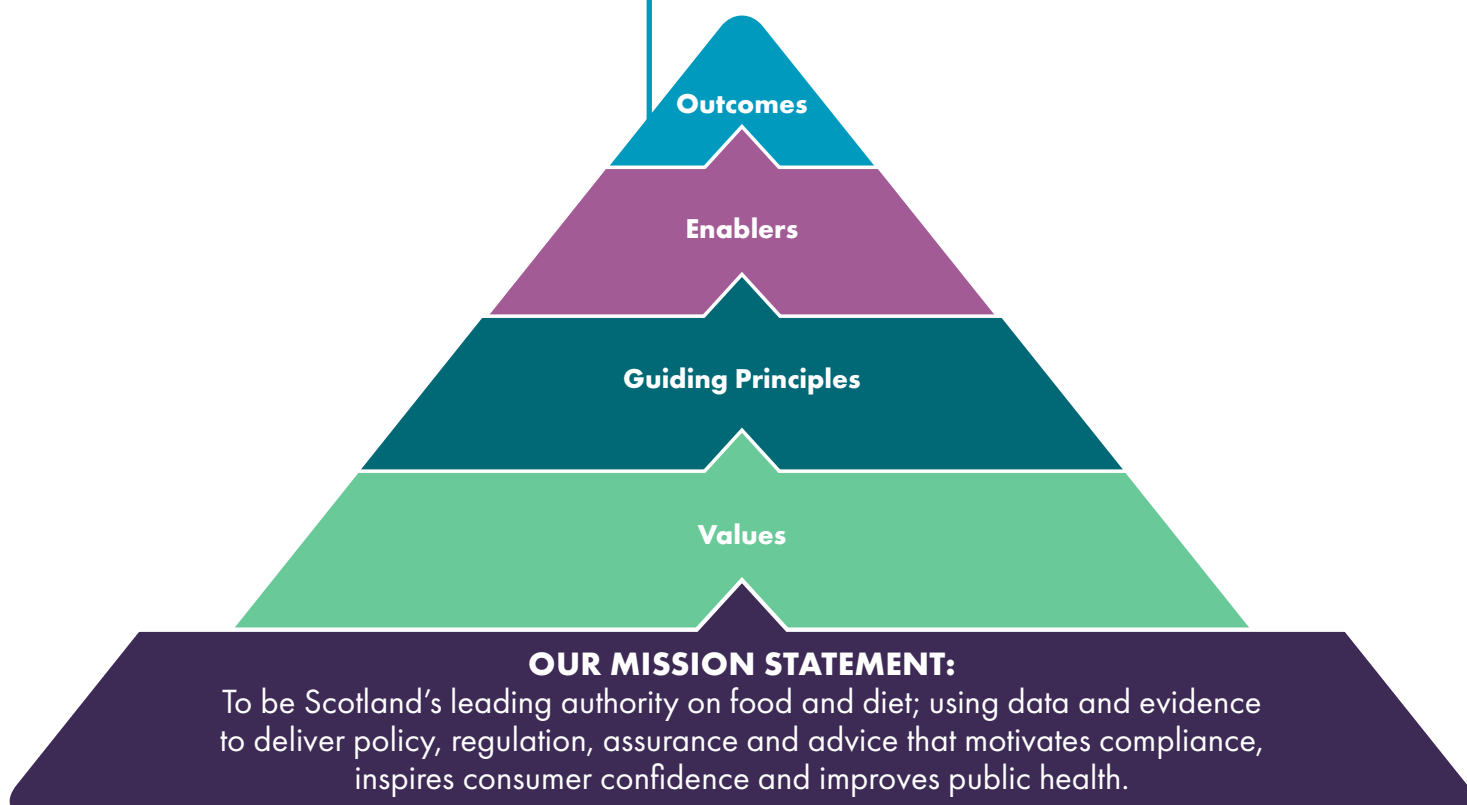
Responsible Food Businesses are enabled to thrive



Consumers are empowered to make positive choices about food



FSS is a Trusted Organisation





How our Outcomes Contribute to Scottish Government's National Performance Framework



We are healthy and active



We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment



We have a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy



We have thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone



We respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination



We are open, connected and make a positive contribution internationally



3. How we will deliver:

Our values and guiding principles

We will deliver our strategy through the following set of values and guiding principles. These will underpin the approaches we will take to attain our mission and achieve our outcomes and vision for Scotland's food environment:

Our Values And Guiding Principles



Consumer focussed

- Keep public health and consumer protection at the heart of what we do
- Ensure our actions recognise the needs of everyone in Scotland and take account of health inequalities



Evidence Based

- Ensure our work is underpinned by robust science and data
- Maintain an understanding of the issues that matter most to consumers in Scotland



Open and transparent

- Protect public health and economic growth – support compliance by regulating fairly, firmly and proportionately
- Be clear that those who generate risks in the food chain are responsible for taking action to protect consumers



Independent

- Preserve our independence, working at arms length from government and industry
- Influence UK policy and risk analysis, taking distinctive decisions for Scotland when the evidence supports it



Inclusive

- Work collaboratively to achieve the greatest benefit for Scottish consumers
- Treat with respect every person, organisation and business that we engage with



We will apply our values and guiding principles to:



- Connect with consumers in Scotland to understand their needs and influence change, promoting a positive food culture and a safer, healthier diet.



- Exploit advances in data science and digitalisation to maximise the value of our data, and translate it in ways that enable others to use it.



- Advance and publicise the evidence base, collaborating with the scientific community through targeted research and the sharing of data and intelligence.



- Continue to embed the principles of our Regulatory Strategy, by helping businesses to achieve high standards and applying appropriate sanctions to address non-compliance.



- Build strong and influential relationships across the UK and internationally, gaining respect and learning from others.

4. What we will deliver: Using data and evidence to address the challenges

Monitoring the Scottish diet

Ensuring everyone in Scotland has ready access to healthy, nutritious food and reducing the levels of diet-related disease are key objectives for Scottish Government, and FSS plays an important role in supporting and influencing policy in this area. Scotland still has a diet that's too high in calories, fats, sugar and salt, and too low in fibre, and fruit and vegetables, and there has been little improvement in this situation over the past seventeen years. **FSS is the only government body in Scotland which collects and publishes a robust national picture of trends in diet and nutrition through our monitoring**

of purchase and estimated consumer intake. Our team of expert registered public health nutritionists employs state of the art tools which digitilise the collection of data on the dietary intakes and purchases of consumers and enable it to be analysed more effectively to report trends on the diet and health of the population. This evidence enables Scottish Government to assess progress with dietary goals and supports the development of policies aimed at improving the diet and reducing the burden of obesity and diet-related disease in Scotland.

Being the number one trusted, authoritative source of advice on diet and nutrition will continue to be a priority for FSS to support the development and implementation of policies aimed at achieving the Scottish dietary goals.



Scotland has been consistently missing its dietary goals for over 17 years



2 out of 3

people are either overweight or obese



Since 2015 we have been updating our keystone situation report, [The Scottish Diet-it needs to Change](#), which draws on a wide range of evidence to describe current dietary trends in Scotland. The data presented in this report has underpinned our recommendations to Ministers on the actions needed to improve Scotland's diet, and went on to shape

[Scottish Government's Diet and Healthy Weight Delivery Plan](#). It also provides a useful reference point to enable health professionals, the food industry, the media and consumers to recognise the scale of the problem, and the role that everyone has to play in supporting dietary improvement.



50%

of the sugar we consume comes from discretionary products



20%

of the calories and fat we eat comes from discretionary products



People living in the least deprived areas of Scotland have more:

- Fruit and vegetables
- Wholemeal bread
- Wholegrain breakfast cereals
- Oil rich and white fish
- Butter, cream and cheese

People living in the most deprived areas of Scotland have more:

- Sugary drinks
- Savoury and meat pies
- Sausages and burgers
- Whole milk



We will develop new ways of making our evidence and advice on diet more accessible to policy makers, influencers, educators and consumers; reaching those who are most affected by poor dietary outcomes by enabling positive changes to the food environment and consumer behaviours.

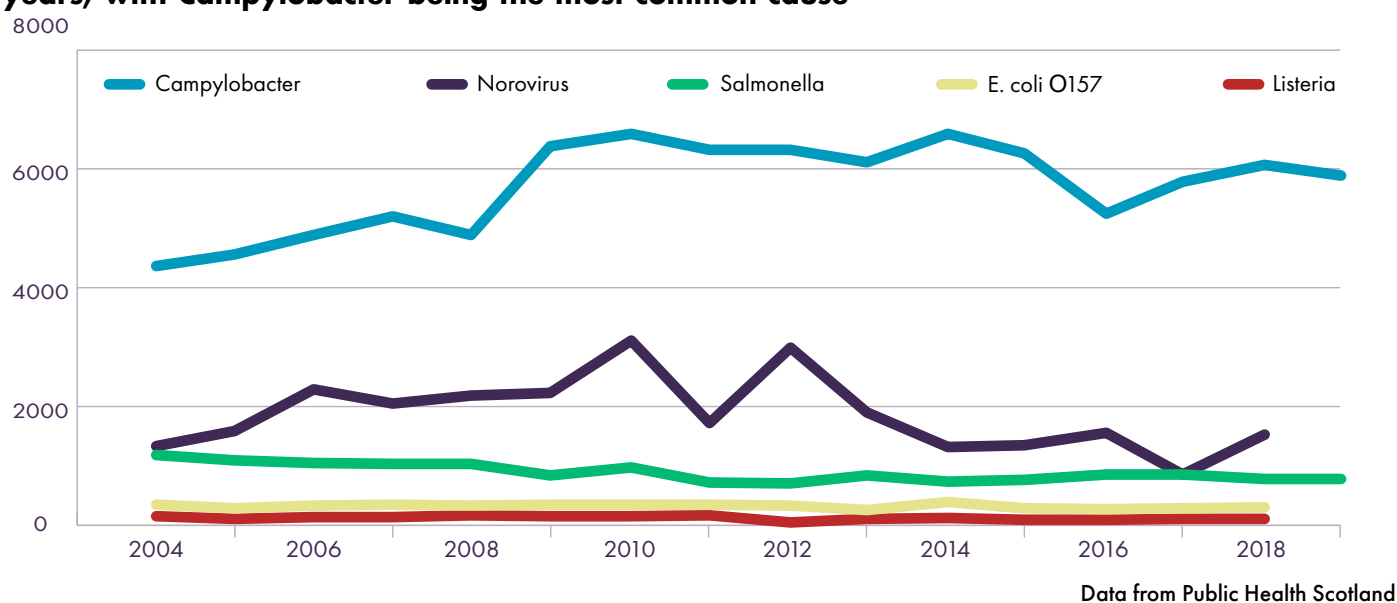


Tackling Foodborne illness

In addition to promoting improvements in dietary health, helping Scottish businesses and consumers to manage food safety risks will always be a key focus of our work. Foodborne illness has continued to have a significant impact on public health, and Campylobacter is the most common cause, with around 6,500 cases reported in Scotland each year.

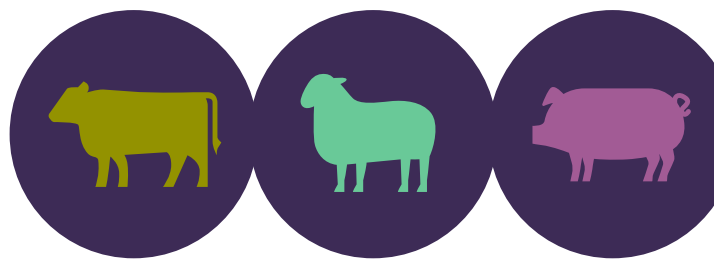
As Campylobacter infection is under-reported, it is estimated that approximately 54,000 people in our population are effected. Our work with Public Health Scotland has shown that 14% of Campylobacter cases in Scotland require admission to hospital, with those in older age groups and more deprived areas of Scotland being at increased risk of severe illness.

Reported cases of foodborne illness have remained relatively consistent over the past 14 years, with Campylobacter being the most common cause



Reducing foodborne illness caused by Shiga-toxin producing *E. coli* (STEC) will also continue to be a priority for FSS. Compared with Campylobacter, STEC is responsible for a significantly lower number of reported cases each year, however, it can result in much more severe illness.

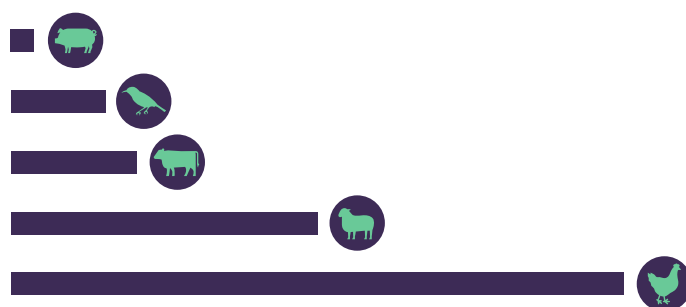
Rates of STEC infection are highest in children, and although it is thought to be most commonly transmitted via environmental sources, it has been implicated in a number of serious outbreaks of foodborne illness in Scotland.



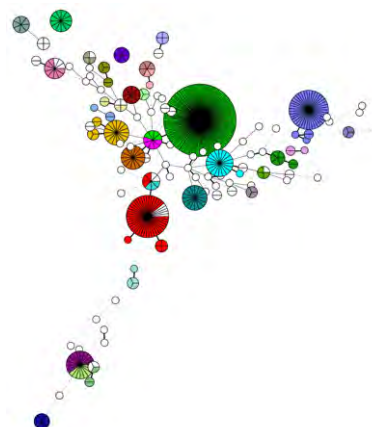
Advances in data science have transformed methods for identifying the sources and transmission routes for foodborne illness through the advent of Whole Genome Sequencing (WGS). We have learned from research and outbreak investigations that our ability

to manage and interpret the complex data sets which are generated by genomic sequencing will become increasingly important in understanding how to reduce foodborne illness in the future.

WGS has allowed us to compare the types of *Campylobacter* found in human infections with those isolated from animals. This has provided evidence that chicken is the most important source



WGS has also helped us to understand the complexity of STEC infection in Scotland – providing evidence to support our policy for managing STEC risks in food



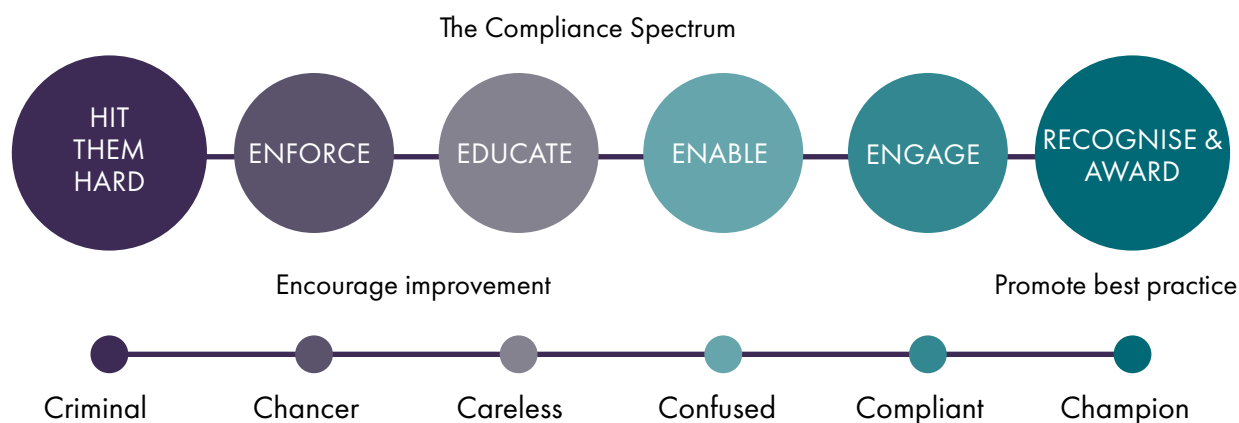
We will make better use of epidemiological and genomic sequencing data to identify where we can make the greatest impact in reducing the burden of foodborne illness: targeting interventions which control transmission and protect the population groups that are most vulnerable



Tailoring regulatory approaches to improve compliance

The analysis of data on business compliance and new evidence-based delivery models will underpin the future development of our [regulatory strategy](#) which outlines our approach to regulatory decision making, based on the compliance spectrum model shown below. This provides a framework for tailoring enforcement, intervention and engagement approaches in ways that effectively identify and dissuade non-compliance, while providing incentives and rewards for businesses which achieve sustained compliance with food and feed law.

During our first five years, we have focussed efforts on developing systems that enable us to collect and analyse FSS and Local Authority compliance records for food and feed businesses across Scotland and understand the patterns of compliance. The implementation of new data-driven regulatory approaches will be a priority for our new strategy, as we take responsibility for a new centralised model for delivering official controls on animal feed and work with our Local Authorities to improve the consistency of food law enforcement in Scotland.



We will enhance the collection, analysis and reporting of data on business compliance – helping enforcement authorities to tailor interventions to the needs of different sectors.



Identifying risks to the food chain

Since 2015, we have also gained significant insights from trends in food incidents, both in terms of the types of products and profile of businesses that tend to be associated with food safety risks. Our food crime unit also gathers intelligence on areas of the food chain that are most vulnerable to fraud through collaboration with agencies across Scotland and the rest of the UK. The evidence suggests that smaller businesses manufacturing perishable foods and high value products with particular Scottish provenance

can be particularly vulnerable to risks, and our experience has highlighted the need for us to target education and technical support to these sectors. Our investigative work has also extended outwith Scotland, through our role in networks for tackling international food crime activities, and our development of horizon scanning and surveillance capabilities, which have helped us to identify global risks to the food supply chain, and assess how these are likely to impact on Scottish businesses and consumers.



We will continue to develop our horizon scanning and surveillance capabilities to ensure we are able to predict and identify risks, including those emerging from changes to global food trade and the regulations that are in place to protect our supply chains.

5. Adapting to a changing food environment

Safeguarding Scotland's food chain post-EU exit

The experience and evidence base we have developed during our first five years provide a strong foundation for delivering this new strategy. However, it will be important to recognise that economic, political and consumer interests with respect to food are much broader than they were when FSS was established in 2015. We couldn't have envisaged the unparalleled changes that we are now facing as a result of EU Exit, which has dominated the food agenda since the 2016 EU referendum. Leaving the EU will have a significant impact on UK food and feed industries

and a transformative effect on the way that our food chain is regulated. There continues to be considerable uncertainty about what lies beyond the transition period at the end of 2020. However, we can be clear that new trading arrangements, and the transfer of functions currently undertaken by the EU Commission, to Westminster and the devolved UK Governments, will require a huge commitment from Scottish food and feed businesses, FSS, and our Local Authority delivery partners to ensure we are equipped to manage the changes that EU Exit will bring to our food system.

What EU Exit Means for the Scottish Food and Feed Chain



Exports

- New markets, assurance systems and administrative requirements for businesses



Imports

- Changes to supply chains and seasonal availability
- New systems for checking and sampling products coming into Scotland



Authorisation

- New requirements for approving regulated products and health or nutrition claims for the UK market



FSS's Responsibilities Post-EU Exit

Protecting High Regulatory Standards

Working with the UK and Scottish Governments to ensure food law continues to maintain high levels of food safety and consumer protection and remains effective beyond EU Exit

Developing New Functions

Working collaboratively with the FSA to develop new UK risk analysis processes to replace those currently carried out by the EU Commission and European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

Strengthening Our Relationships and Influence

Collaborating with the Scottish and UK Governments to build and strengthen our engagement and influence within an international food landscape

Being Operationally Ready

Working with Local Authorities and laboratories to deliver new assurance systems for food and feed support exporting businesses, and verify the safety of products imported into Scotland

Our strategy will be flexible to enable us to deliver our priorities alongside new responsibilities for maintaining food and feed safety and standards when the UK leaves the EU.



Managing the impacts of COVID-19

In 2020 COVID-19 delivered a further shock to our food system, resulting in economic and societal impacts that we will need to take into account as we embark on our new five year strategy. Although there is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus can be transmitted through food, FSS will continue to play its part in supporting the collective effort to suppress the spread of the virus by helping Scottish food businesses to maintain COVID secure workplaces and minimise disruptions to the supply chain.

Looking forward, it will be important for our new strategy to consider the impact of the pandemic on our food chain and public health. Changes to supply and demand, and the diversification of food businesses can present new risks to safety and opportunities for criminal activity, and impacts on availability have the potential to exacerbate food and health inequalities in Scotland. The association between excess body weight and poorer health outcomes from COVID-19 is also relevant to our work on diet and nutrition and will be an important consideration for our future research and communications strategies in this area.

Delivering our strategy during the COVID-19 pandemic and Scotland's recovery from it will require us to review our priorities in line with changes to public health risks and impacts on our food supply chain.





Understanding what matters to the people of Scotland

FSS's third statutory function is to '**protect the other interests of consumers in relation to food**', and it will be important for this strategy to take account of how these interests are being affected by the changes to our food environment. Our research has identified that consumers in Scotland are concerned about the availability, standards and price of food post-EU Exit, and that COVID-19 has had an impact on the way they access and prepare food. Effective communication strategies which are capable of reaching all parts of Scottish society will be essential to ensure we are able to keep pace with consumer opinions on the changing food environment, and the issues that matter most to them.

The concept of sustainability has also become increasingly important, and is an area where consumers and stakeholders have indicated that FSS has a role to play.



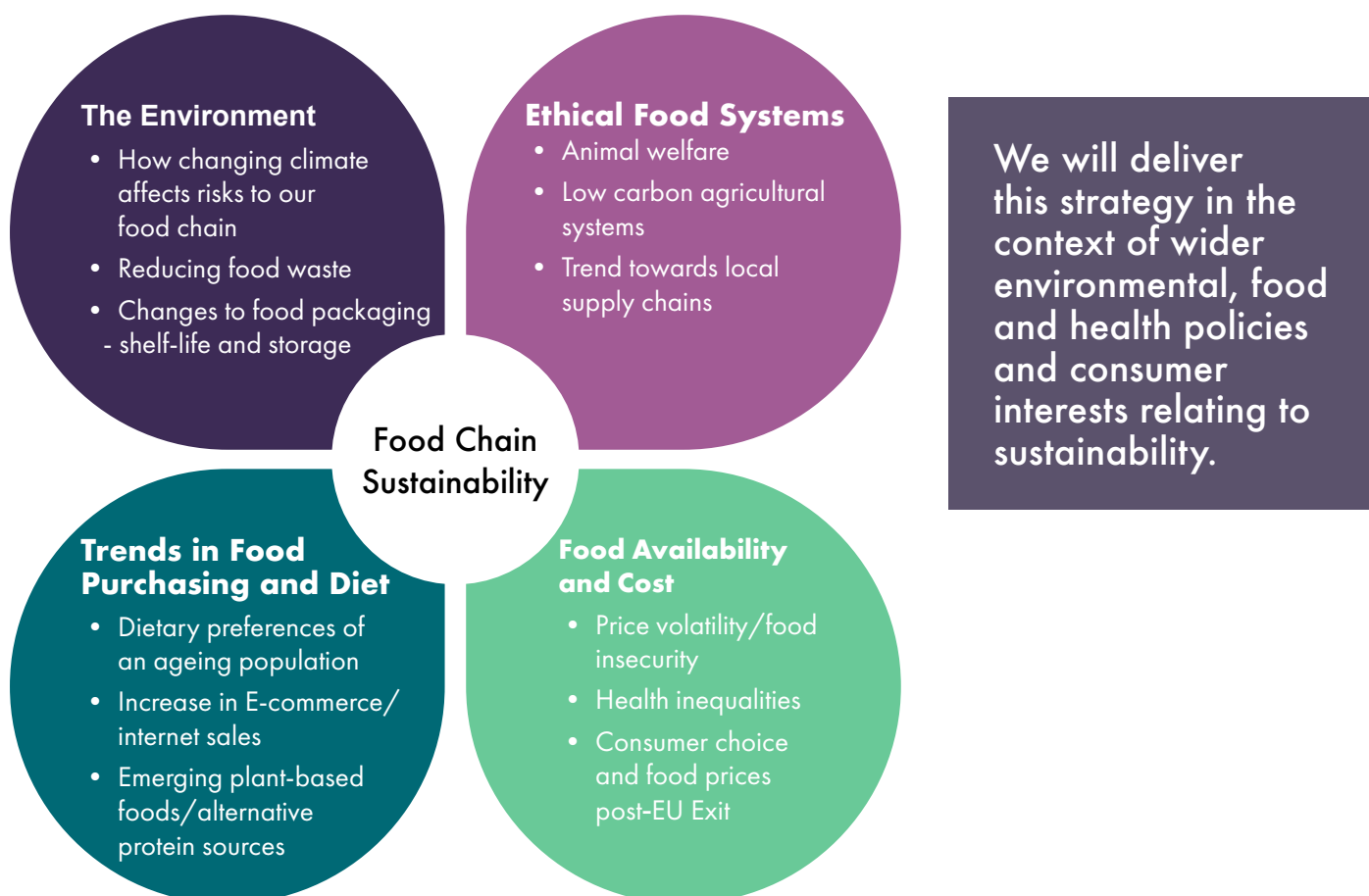
We will continue to engage with the people of Scotland to understand how changes to our food system are affecting their purchasing behaviours and attitudes, to assess impacts on diet, food safety and inequalities.



The established definition of sustainability is to ensure development “**meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.**”¹ With regard to food, sustainability is a multi-faceted concept comprising a range of environmental, social, ethical and economic issues which are summarised below.

Although these fall outwith FSS’s statutory remit, they can influence dietary choices, risks to our food chain and public health. It is therefore appropriate for our new strategy to take these issues into account and consider where we are able to contribute to Scottish Government priorities for a sustainable food and drink industry, and its commitment regarding climate change adaptation.

Consumer interests in sustainability which will impact on our strategy



1 G. Bruntland et al. (1987) Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future.

6. Our partnerships: Working together to achieve shared goals

It is clear that we will not be able to address the challenges ahead without having effective partnerships in place with those who share our vision for **a safe, healthy and sustainable food landscape that benefits and protects the health and wellbeing of everyone in Scotland**. As we move into our new strategy, it will be essential for us to strengthen and re-focus our relationships with key partners both nationally and internationally, not only as a result of EU Exit, but also to enable us to capitalise on the new approaches for delivering public health reform in Scotland.



Looking beyond Scotland, the changes that will arise following EU Exit will require FSS to build on its existing networks within the food, agricultural and public health arenas, both across the UK and globally. Post-EU Exit, FSS's work will be underpinned by new UK Frameworks for food and feed safety, labelling and standards and nutrition and health claims, requiring us to re-define our existing partnerships with the Food Standards Agency and UK Government and build new relationships with the EU Commission. Changes to our trading arrangements and systems for gathering intelligence on the food chain will also require us to bolster our links with food and public health bodies outwith the EU in order that we have a good understanding of the risks that may be associated with new supply chains and are able to learn from the experiences of other countries how these risks can be managed. **Within Scotland**, the Local Authority enforcement community will continue to be our most important delivery partnership. It will be critical for our new strategy to take full account of the significant resource challenges faced by Local Authority food protection services post EU Exit, and to re-calibrate and strengthen our ways of working to deliver a safe and healthy food environment for the future.



It will also be important to recognise the opportunities that will arise through forthcoming changes to the delivery of public health and consumer protection in Scotland. We have particularly welcomed the establishment, in April 2020, of Public Health Scotland, which aims to provide leadership to enable and support local and national bodies in working together to improve health and wellbeing in communities. A key focus is to deliver collaborative action on [Scotland's public health priorities](#), one of which is a **Scotland where we eat well, have a healthy weight and are physically active**. Through effective partnership with Public Health Scotland, we will be able to contribute our expertise in public health nutrition and our robust evidence base to support

interventions which can be delivered at community level, reaching the groups which experience the most serious dietary health outcomes and co-producing solutions which work for them.

The new Consumer Scotland Bill has been another positive step, signalling the development of a new dedicated consumer authority which will complement FSS's work in representing the interests of the Scottish public in relation to food. Establishing a strong relationship with Consumer Scotland will provide a further means of extending our reach and ensuring our advice is appropriately communicated to those who have most to benefit from it.

7. Understanding the risks

Working in such a dynamic environment will require FSS to be flexible and outcome-focussed in order to navigate the significant public health, political and environmental challenges that lie ahead. Our key enablers – our expertise, our delivery models, our use of science, data and evidence, and our partnerships – will be critical to our success.

In light of our experience in dealing with the significant changes that are taking place across our food system and the uncertainties we continue to face, it is also important for us to recognise the risks that will affect our ability to deliver this strategy over the next five years. These are described below, and serve to demonstrate the importance of being able to adapt, and take account of the external factors which will have the greatest influence over our work.

Our Enablers

Adaptability to change

Our expertise

Our ways of working

Data and Digitalisation

Evidence and Understanding

Sustainable delivery models

Key Risks to Delivery

COVID-19

New risks to the food supply chain and diversion of regulatory resources to support public health response

EU EXIT

Constitutional affairs - trade agreements and future relationships with the EU and UK Government

EMERGING TECHNOLOGY AND E-COMMERCE

Ensuring regulation and assurance keeps pace with new products and the expansion of online food markets

PUBLIC SECTOR RESOURCING

Increasing pressures on Local Authority budgets, and a delivery model which lacks the resilience needed to meet future challenges

It will be critical to keep this strategy under on-going review to enable us to keep pace with change and re-direct resources where current public health priorities and consumer interests require us to do so.

8. FSS strategy for 2021–2026: Our goals for the next five years

Our new strategy defines six goals that will help us to achieve our mission and deliver against our five key outcomes: **Food is Safe and Authentic, Consumers have Healthier Diets, Responsible Food Businesses are Enabled to Thrive, Consumers are Empowered to Make Positive Choices About Food and FSS is a Trusted Organisation.** Under each goal, we have identified four priority activities which will form the

basis of our Corporate Delivery Plan, to be published in April 2021. The Corporate Plan will detail the importance of these activities and how we will deliver them over the first three years of our strategy. As an outcome-focussed food body, we will also publish indicators for monitoring our progress, ensuring our work remains aligned with Scottish Government's national performance framework.

FSS Outcomes for 2021–2026



Food is Safe and Authentic



Consumers Have Healthier Diets



Responsible Food Businesses
are enabled to thrive



Consumers are empowered to make positive
choices about food



FSS is a Trusted Organisation





FSS Goals for 2021–2026

Goal 1: A food safety and standards assurance system that commands international respect and consumer confidence, supporting the Scottish economy beyond EU Exit.

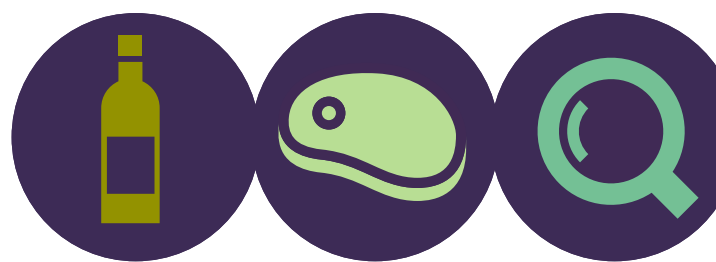
Outcomes: Food is safe and authentic, responsible food business are enabled to thrive, FSS is a trusted organisation.

- Work collaboratively across the UK, applying robust risk analysis processes to ensure the interests of Scottish consumers continue to be protected when food law is repatriated from the EU.
- Ensure products imported from other countries are safe and meet the high standards expected by Scottish consumers.
- Develop capability and capacity needed to ensure a robust system of official controls which are effective in detecting risks to the food chain that arise following EU Exit.
- Implement assurance systems which protect the interests of Scottish consumers and exporting businesses requiring certification that products meet the standards of countries to which they are being exported.

Goal 2: A regulatory system that rewards compliance, promotes learning and applies appropriate sanctions when laws are broken.

Outcomes: Food is safe and authentic, responsible food business are enabled to thrive, FSS is a trusted organisation.

- Lead and support partners responsible for delivering food law in Scotland in implementing a fair, consistent and effective system of regulation.
- Develop evidence-based regulatory approaches which are tailored to address the needs of different sectors and improve business compliance levels.
- Work with stakeholders to develop and implement more efficient and sustainable approaches for delivering official controls and regulatory assurance over food and feed law, including a new centralised model for animal feed in Scotland.
- Develop a national framework that provides the scope and high level principles for any future funding of official controls.



Goal 3: A research and data science capability which enables us to detect risks, monitor public health trends and consumer behaviours and translate evidence into action.

Outcomes: Food is safe and authentic, consumers have healthier diets, responsible food business are enabled to thrive, consumers are empowered to make positive choices about food, FSS is a trusted organisation.

- Develop and embed an enhanced data science and analytics capability, employing common standards and secure systems which translate and present FSS data in a way that enables it to be used effectively.
- Implement a new research strategy which takes account of the changing food environment, promoting collaboration and ensuring FSS evidence needs are clearly defined and communicated to the science community.
- Continue to build FSS's evidence base on diet and nutrition using state of the art monitoring tools, social science and market research to assess trends in food purchasing and intake and insights on behaviours which impact on dietary choices.
- Strengthen our evidence base on food safety, food authenticity and diet and nutrition through improved horizon scanning, research, and surveillance strategies which are capable of identifying emerging risks.

Goal 4: Improve the transparency of food information, empowering consumers to make safe, healthy and authentic choices.

Outcomes: Responsible food businesses are enabled to thrive, consumers are empowered to make positive choices about food, FSS is a trusted organisation.

- Engage with Scottish citizens, businesses and Local Authorities to develop a new Consumer Information Scheme which allows consumers to make informed choices about where they purchase food based on compliance with food law.
- Support businesses in providing accurate food safety, nutritional and allergens information, and help consumers to understand and use it.
- Influence changes to the food environment which support consumers in making healthier choices.
- Continue to raise awareness of the risks of food crime, ensuring consumers understand how to recognise and report it.



Goal 5: Be respected as an authority on food protection and public health nutrition, promoting change through impactful relationships within and beyond Scotland that enable us to influence, learn and collaborate.

Outcomes: FSS is a trusted organisation.

- Consolidate FSS's role as the primary source of evidence on diet in Scotland, drawing on our unique expertise and data-driven approaches to influence and inform policy development.
- Build on FSS's reputation as Scotland's food safety authority, working collaboratively to reduce the burden of foodborne illness and contributing expertise to support wider food and environmental policy.
- Provide the platform which enables Scottish enforcement authorities and food businesses to submit information and access evidence-based advice needed to support compliance with food law.
- Establish FSS within key UK and international fora relating to public health, food safety and food crime, working in partnership to promote Scottish interests and share learning.

Goal 6: Apply effective strategies for engaging with all parts of Scottish society; informing consumers and understanding the food issues that matter most to them.

Outcomes: Consumers are empowered to make positive choices about food, FSS is a trusted organisation, consumers have healthier diets.

- Use the best available data and methods to strengthen insights on behaviours, attitudes and the wider food interests of the Scottish population.
- Integrate evidence from public health research and demographic segmentation to ensure advice on foodborne illness reduction and dietary health improvement is targeted to the appropriate population groups for maximum benefit.
- Communicate advice and messaging using a range of channels including social media, education, consumer engagement and partnerships to reach the intended audience and sustain impact and understanding.
- Work with partners to support interventions for improving dietary intakes which make the best use of our evidence and are tailored to the needs of Scottish communities.

9. Maintaining organisational excellence

In addition to delivering our six strategic goals, it will be important for FSS to continue to operate effectively as a public body. This means being able to demonstrate that our work contributes to the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework and budget priorities, that we are efficient and provide value for money, and that we comply with the legal obligations that govern our ways of working and ensure accountability.

FSS is also a growing organisation, and we will be embarking on this new strategy with a much larger workforce, bringing fresh skills and expertise that will support us in delivering new functions when we leave the EU and adapting to the uncertainties that lie ahead. Investing in people and skills will therefore be critical to our success in maintaining organisational excellence when we move into the new food landscape.

GOVERNANCE

- Ensure the use of robust, peer reviewed science and evidence, and transparent risk analysis processes which clearly explain uncertainties, risks and benefits
- Implement internal control systems with appropriate levels of assurance, overseen by an audit and risk committee
- Review Memoranda of understanding with key partners to ensure collaborative working remains effective as the landscape changes

PEOPLE AND SKILLS

- Implement a people strategy and internal values which support the development and retention of a skilled, collaborative and motivated workforce
- Review FSS responses to the Scottish Government People Survey, engaging with staff to recognise success and address issues
- Deliver effective internal communications across the FSS workforce, to promote engagement and understanding of the needs of individuals, regardless of their role and working pattern

EFFICIENT RESOURCING

- Ensure resourcing is aligned to strategic priorities and managed using effective accounting systems
- Charge for regulatory services at rates which reflect delivery standards
- Improve delivery through sustainable ways of working which promote equality and best use of resources.

ACCOUNTABILITY

- Hold no less than four open board meetings annually, with regular reporting from the Audit and Risk Committee
- Publish performance metrics for measuring progress with the six strategic goals defined in this document
- Lay an annual report of FSS's activities, accounts and performance before the Scottish Parliament