

# Consumer Insights Tracker

**October – December 2024**

The Consumer Insights Tracker is an online monthly tracking survey commissioned by the Food Standards Agency (FSA). It monitors the behaviour and attitudes of adult consumers aged 16+ in England, Wales and Northern Ireland in relation to food.

This report presents findings for topics we track regularly including consumer concerns in relation to food, food affordability, and confidence in the FSA as a regulator.

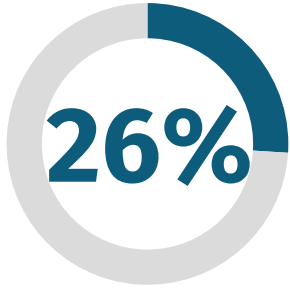
Sometimes we include other topics on an ad-hoc basis. These findings are available in the accompanying data tables. In this report we have included additional findings from the November survey on food safety over the festive period.



# Key findings for October-December 2024

Please click the headings to be directed to the specific section of the report

## Food affordability

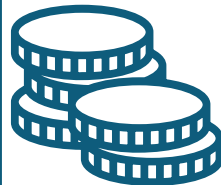


Approximately a quarter (26%) were worried about being able to afford food in December 2024.

This represents an increase from a fifth (20%) in August 2024.

## Food affordability

There has been an increase in the number of younger people (aged 16-34) reporting they have taken actions to reduce energy bills or save money in December 2024 compared to December 2023. For instance, 11% of younger people said they had turned off a fridge/freezer that contains food in December 2023, which rose to 24% in December 2024. Among those aged 35-54 and 55+, there has been no difference in the same time period.



## Food concerns



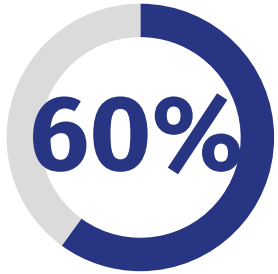
Food prices (87%), ultra-processed food (79%), and food poverty (74%) are the top three food concerns in December 2024.

These issues have consistently been among the top consumer concerns about food in the UK across all waves of the survey.

# Key findings for October-December 2024 continued

Please click the headings to be directed to the specific section of the report

## Food supply chain



60% were confident in the food supply chain in December 2024. This is the same as October and November 2024.

Confidence has remained broadly stable since November 2023.

## The FSA



Among those with some knowledge of the FSA, the proportion who have trust in the FSA to do its job rose from 56% in September 2024 to 61% in October and 63% in November, before declining back to 57% in December 2024.

## Christmas food safety

In November 2024, when asked about cooking for others, over the festive period or another special occasion, just under half (45%) said they would be likely to leave food out after it is served (e.g., for a buffet) and eat it in a few hours later. Just over a quarter (27%) said they would be likely to store food that should be refrigerated in a cool place due to a lack of space in the fridge.



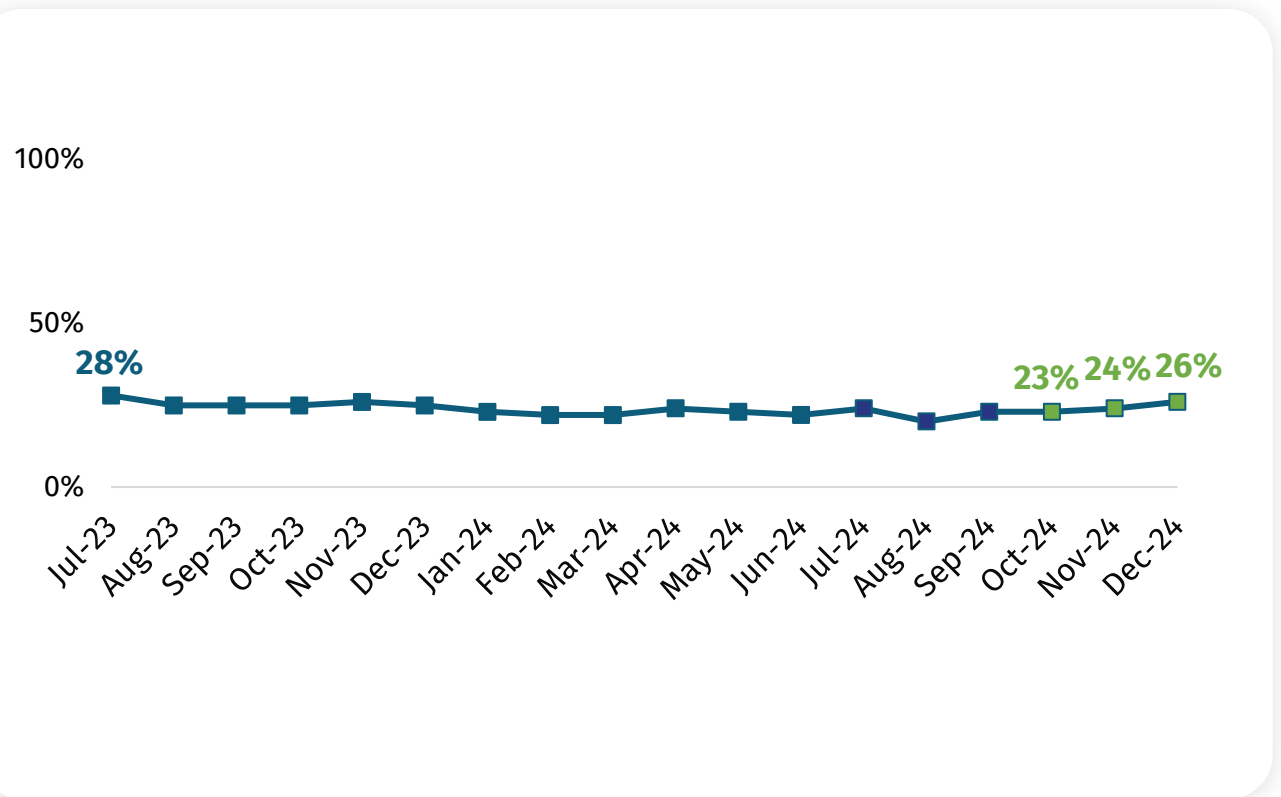
# Between October and December 2024, the proportion worried about their household not being able to afford food increased slightly

This represents an upwards trend since August 2024, rising from 20% to 26% in December 2024. More data is needed to confirm whether this trend is sustained.

The new data points (from October to December) are shown in a different colour

Food affordability

## Proportion who reported worrying about their household not being able to afford food in the next month



▲▼ Statistically significant differences compared to November shown with arrows

Q3m. To what extent, if at all, are you worried you/your household will not be able to afford food in the next month?

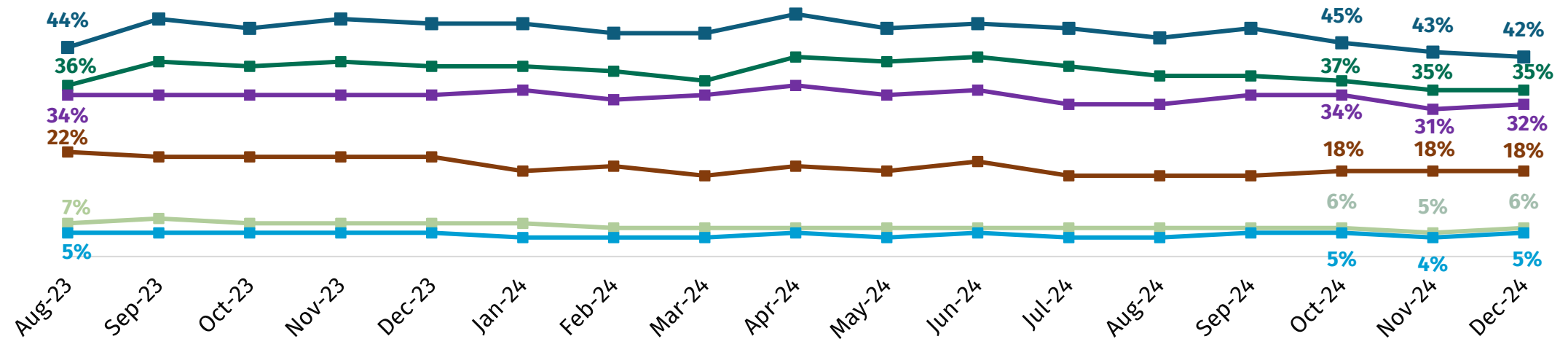
Base: All in December 2024 (n=2,036), November (n=2,022), October (n=2,008), September (n=2,014), August (n=2,008), July (n=2,070), June (n=2,056), May (n=2,067), April (n=2,061), March (n=2,015), February (n=2,066), January (n=2,038), December (n=2,026), November (n=2,064), October (n=2,062), September (n=2,057), August (n=2,044) and July 2023 (n=2,085)

# The proportion reporting that at least one of the following statements applies to them or their household has remained relatively stable over time, at above three in five (63% in December)

Choosing cheaper alternatives rather than branded products to save money saw a sustained decrease across the quarter, dropping from 48% in September to 42% in December

## Shopping statements

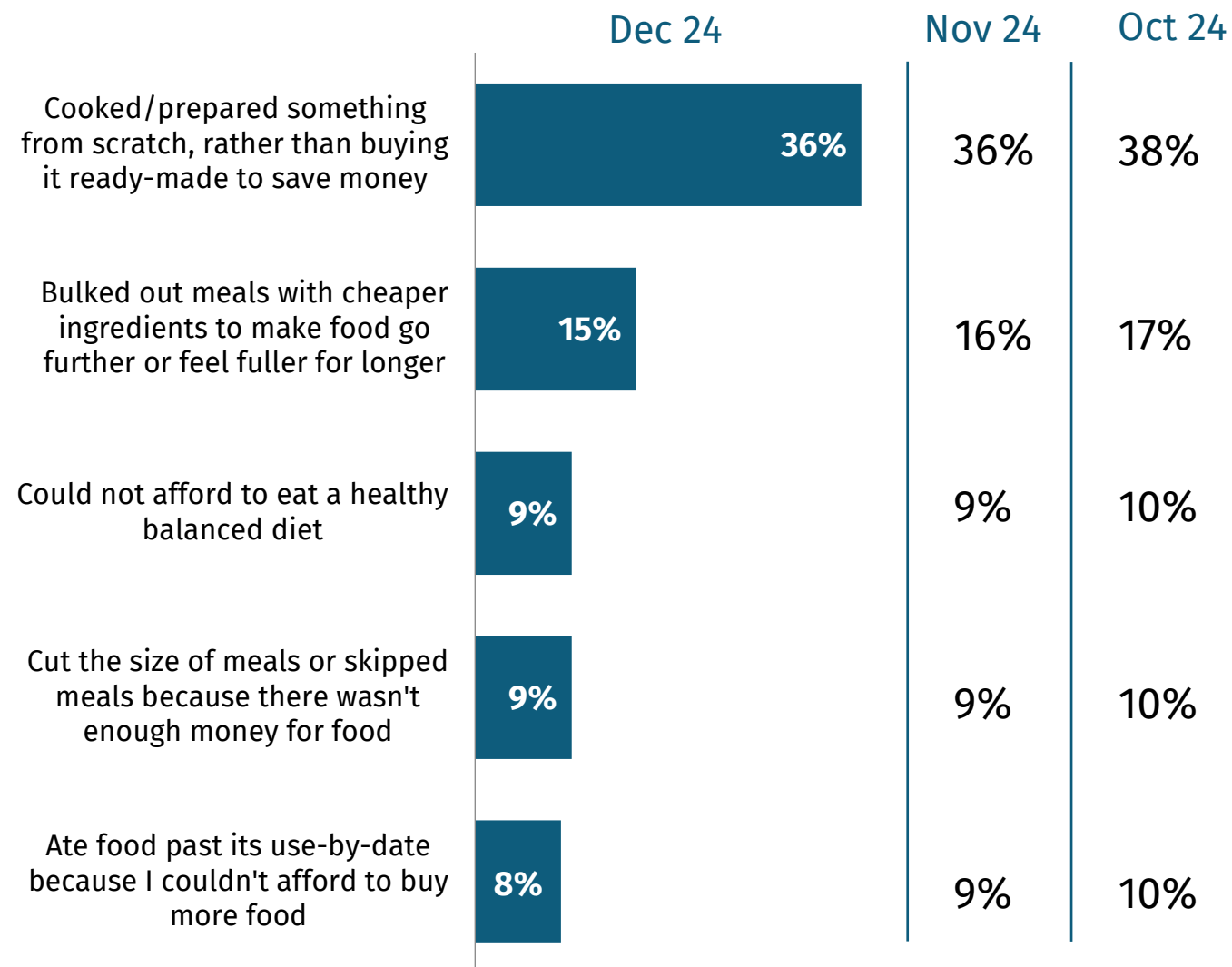
- Chose cheaper alternatives rather than branded products to save money
- Bought reduced / discounted food close to its use-by-date to save money
- Shopped for food in multiple supermarkets/shops to save money
- Bought less fresh food and more long-life foods instead to save money
- Could not afford to buy food that meets my animal welfare or environmental values
- Could not afford my essential food shopping



Q6. In the last month, did any of the following apply to you, or someone else in your household? Please tick all that apply. I, or someone in my household...  
 Base: All in December 2024 (n=2,036), November (n=2,022), October (n=2,008), September (n=2,014), August (n=2,008), July (n=2,070), June (n=2,056), May (n=2,067), April (n=2,061), March (n=2,015), February (n=2,066), January (n=2,038), December (n=2,026), November (n=2,064), October (n=2,062), September (n=2,057) and August 2023 (n=2,044). Please note: Total values do not add to 100% as participants could select multiple responses.

Statistically significant differences compared to November shown with arrows

## Proportion who had the following apply to them or someone else in their household



Statistically significant differences compared to November shown with arrows

**Between October and December 2024, there was no notable change in the cooking and eating behaviours asked about**

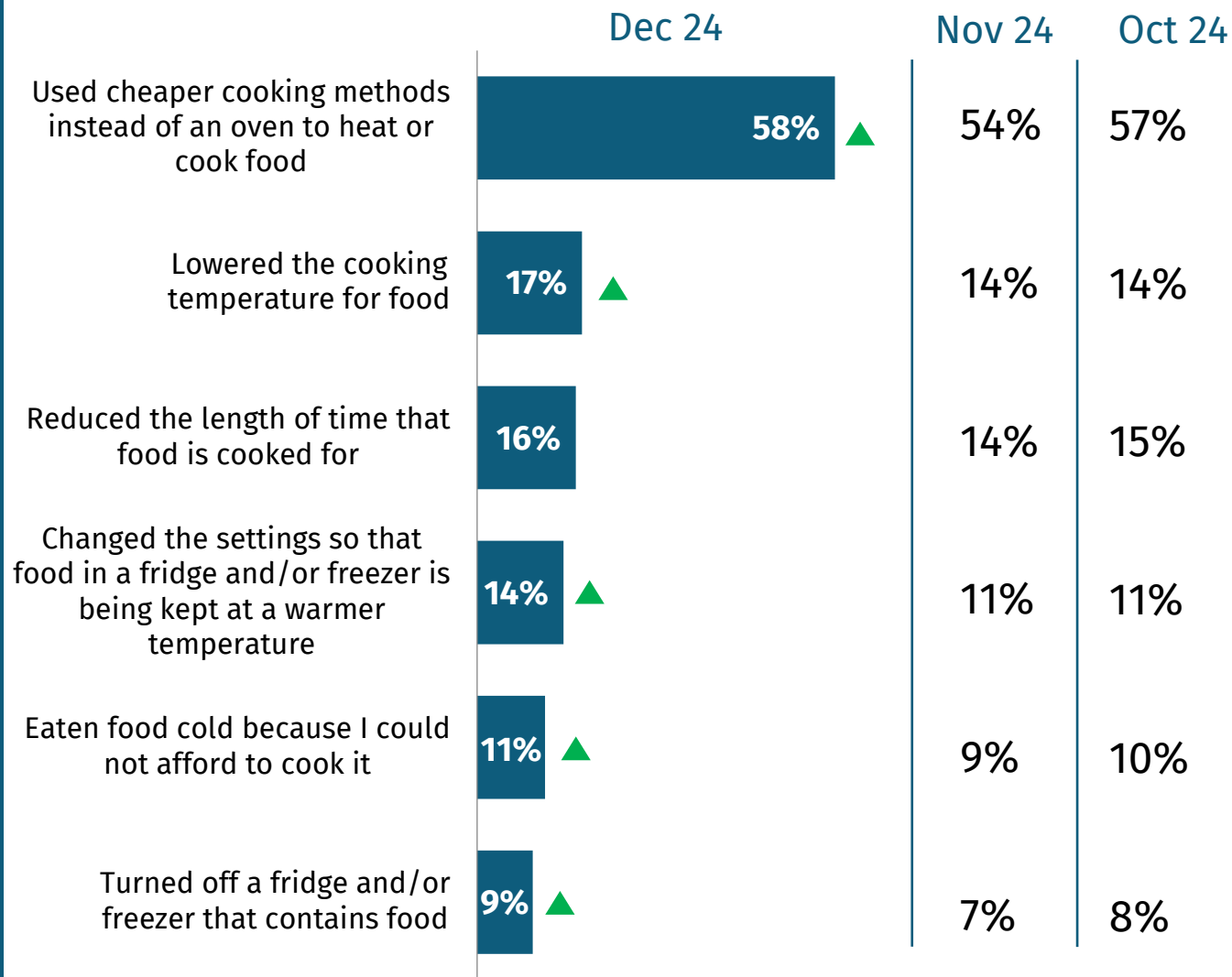
Q6. In the last month, did any of the following apply to you, or someone else in your household? Please tick all that apply. I, or someone in my household...

Base: All in December 2024 (n=2,036), November (n=2,022) and October (n=2,008)



# In December 2024, a higher proportion of consumers reported food-related behaviours to reduce energy bills, compared to previous months

## Proportion who did any of the following to reduce energy bills or save money in the last month



▲ ▼ Statistically significant differences compared to November shown with arrows

Q8m. In the last month, which, if any, of the following have you done to reduce your energy bills and save money?

Base: All in December 2024 (n=2,036), November (n=2,022) and October (n=2,008)

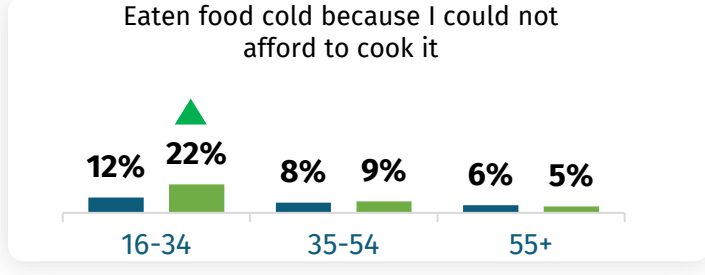
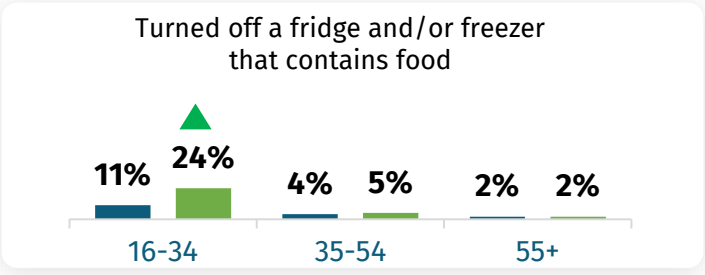
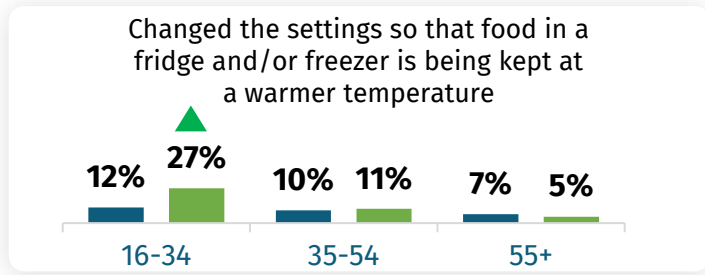
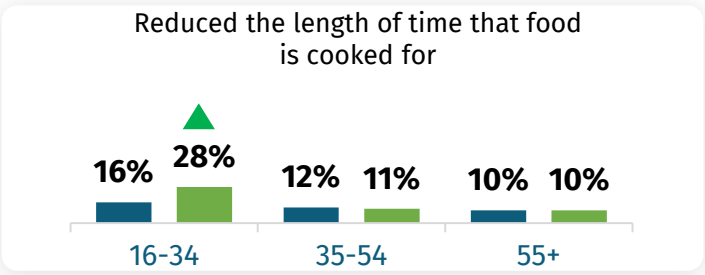
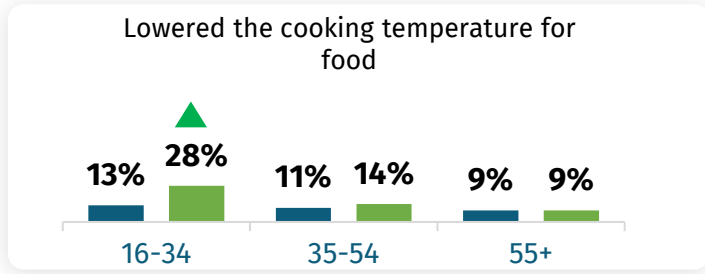
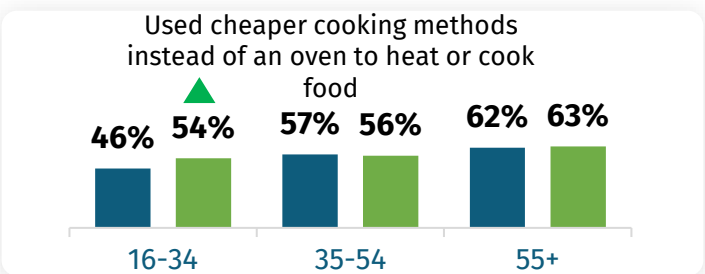
There has been an increase in the number of younger people (aged 16-34) who engaged in actions to reduce their energy bills to save money in December 2024 compared with December 2023. Those aged 35-54 and 55+ show no change over the same period.

Q8m. In the last month, which, if any, of the following have you done to reduce your energy bills and save money?  
 Base. Those aged 16-34 (n=561 in December 2024 and n=489 in December 2023), those aged 35-54 (n=583 in December 2024 and n=693 in December 2023) and those aged 55+ (n=892 in December 2024 and n=844 in December 2023)

Data points from December 2023 are shown in blue, data points from December 2024 are shown in green

### Proportion who did any of the following to reduce energy bills or save money in the last month

Age



▲ ▼ Statistically significant differences compared to December 2023 shown with arrows



# From October to December 2024, the proportion reporting they are worried about there not being enough food available for their household in the next month increased

This increased from 19% in October and November 2024 to 24% in December 2024.

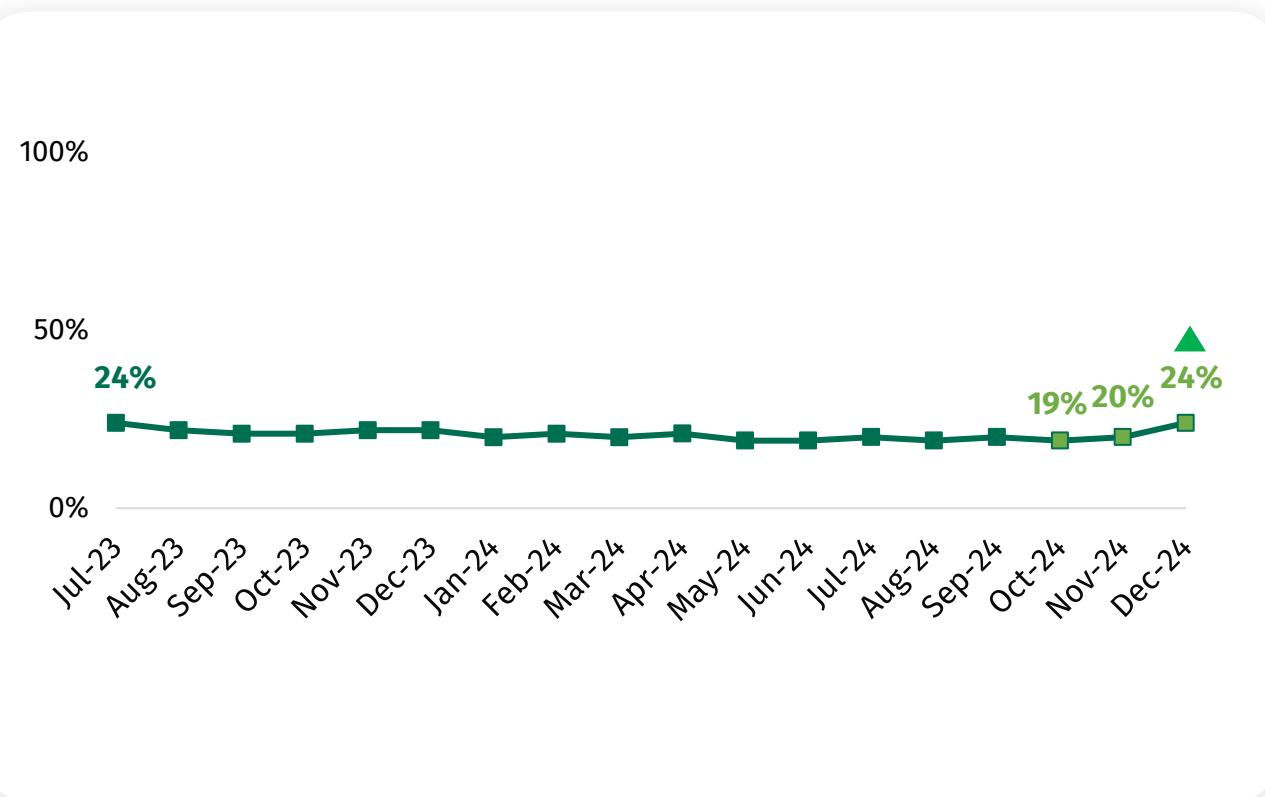
Q2m. To what extent, if at all, are you worried about there not being enough food available for you/your household to buy in the next month?

Base: All in December 2024 (n=2,036), November (n=2,022), October (n=2,008), September (n=2,014), August (n=2,008), July (n=2,070), June (n=2,056), May (n=2,067), April (n=2,061), March (n=2,015), February (n=2,066), January (n=2,038), December (n=2,026), November (n=2,064), October (n=2,062), September (n=2,057), August (n=2,044) and July 2023 (n=2,085)

The new data points (from October to December) are shown in a different colour

Food availability

## Proportion who reported worrying about there not being enough food available for their household in the next month



▲▼ Statistically significant differences compared to November shown with arrows

# In December 2024, the top concerns were food prices, ultra-processed, or over-processing of food, and food poverty and food inequality; unchanged from previous months

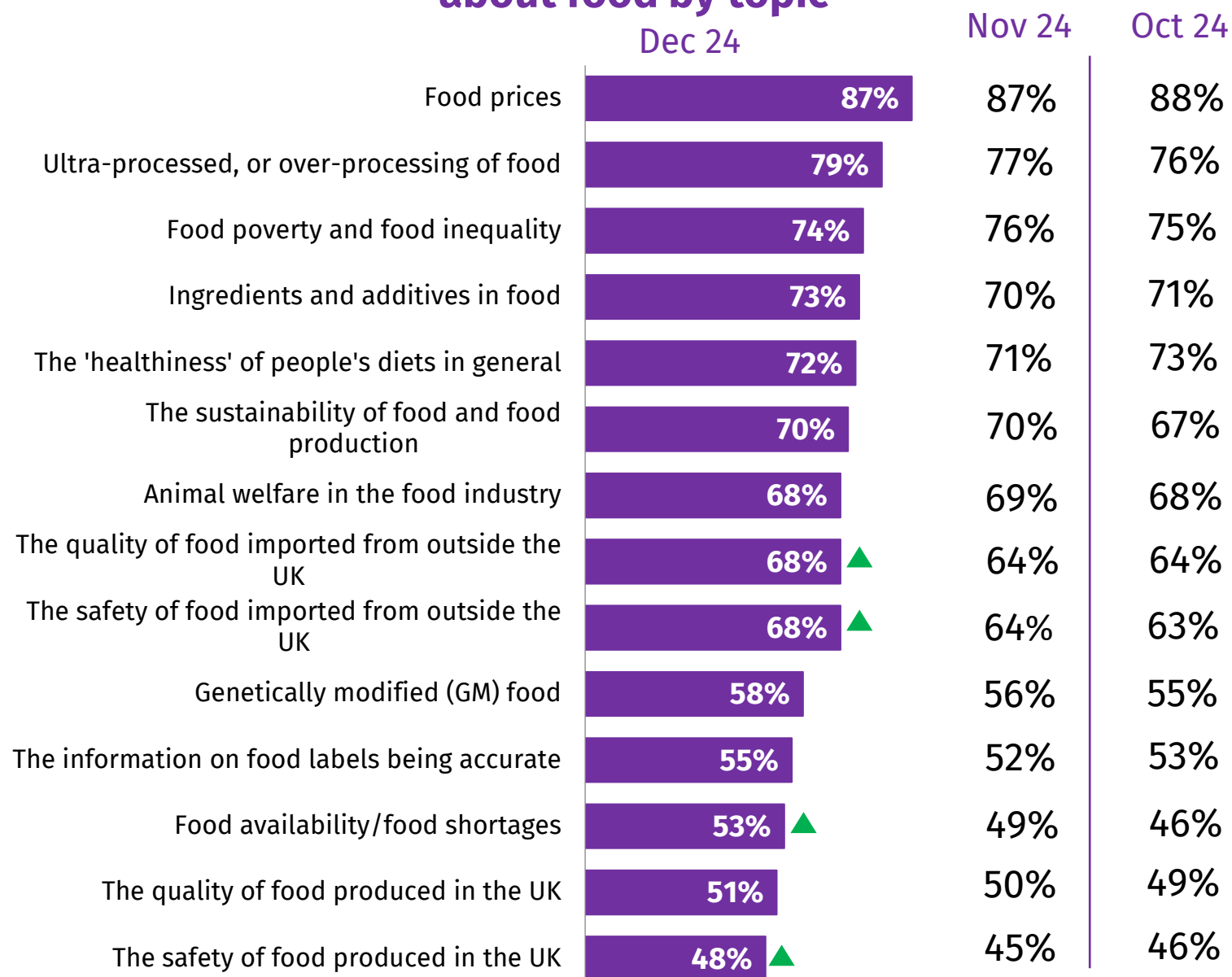
Q12. Thinking about food in the UK in general. At the moment, how concerned, if at all, do you feel about each of the following topics?

Base: All in December 2024 (n=2,036), November (n=2,022) and October (n=2,008)

Respondents were shown all of the topics listed and asked how concerned, if at all, they felt about each. Figures shown in chart are the proportion 'highly concerned' or 'somewhat concerned'.

## Proportion who reported concern about food by topic

Food concerns

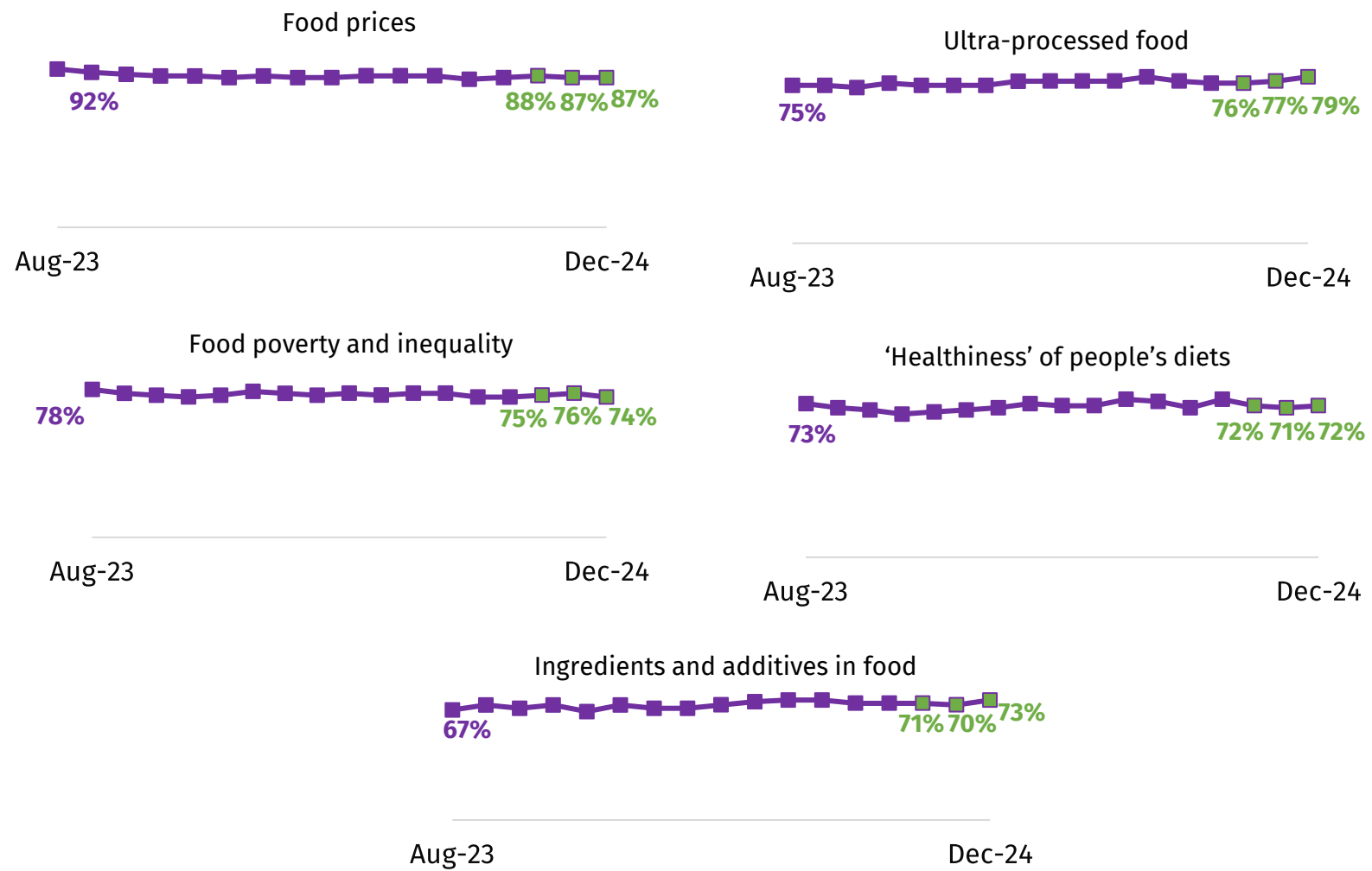


▲ Statistically significant differences compared to November shown with arrows

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# Across the top 5 listed, concern remains broadly comparable between October and December 2024.

## Proportion who reported concern about food by topic



Q12. Thinking about food in the UK in general. At the moment, how concerned, if at all, do you feel about each of the following topics? (Top 5 concerns shown)

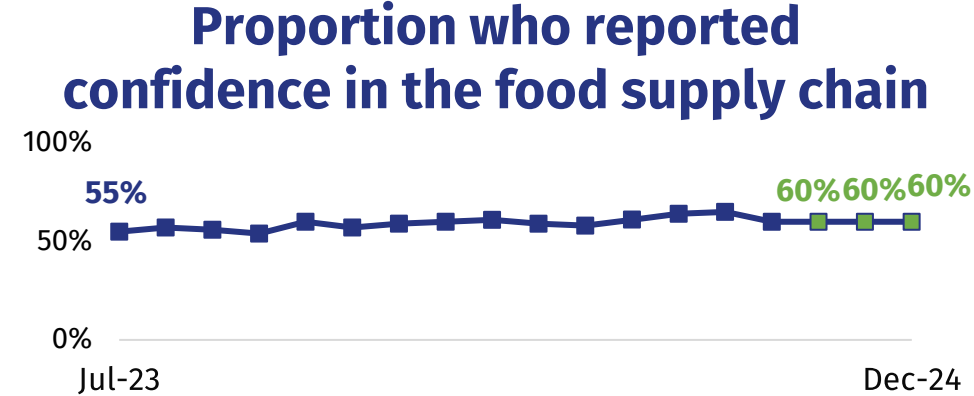
Base: All in December 2024 (n=2,036), November (n=2,022), October (n=2,008), September (n=2,014), August (n=2,008), July (n=2,070), June (n=2,056), May (n=2,067), April (n=2,061), March (n=2,015), February (n=2,066), January (n=2,038), December (n=2,026), November (n=2,064), October (n=2,062), September (n=2,057) and August 2023 (n=2,044)

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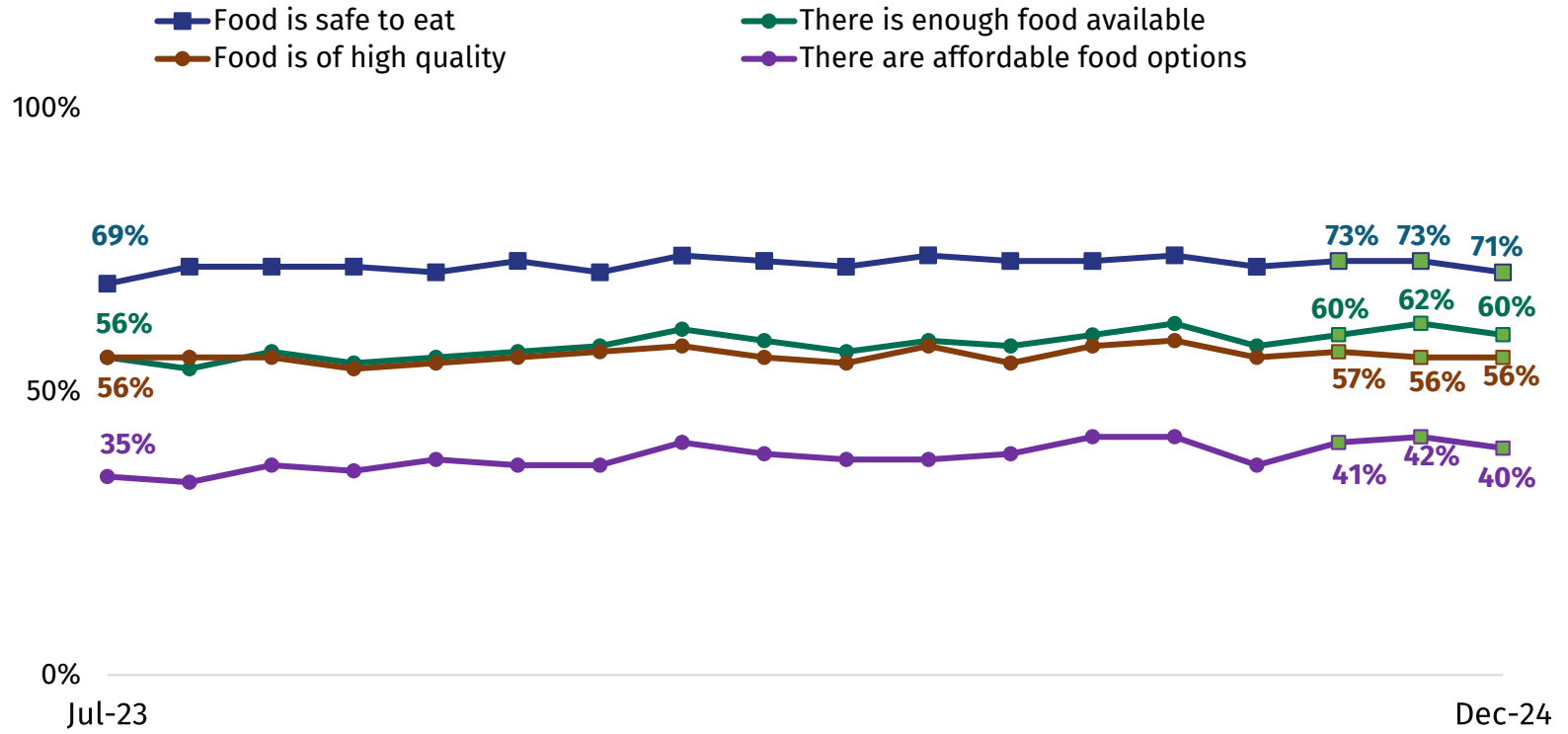
▲▼ Statistically significant differences compared to November shown with arrows

# The proportion reporting confidence in the food supply chain remains stable at 60% across October 2024 to December 2024

The new data points (from October to December) are shown in a different colour



### Proportion who reported confidence that those involved in the food supply chain ensure that...



▲ ▼ Statistically significant differences compared to November shown with arrows

Q13. How confident are you in the food supply chain? That is all the processes involved in bringing food to your table.

Q14. How confident are you that those involved in the food supply chain in the UK...

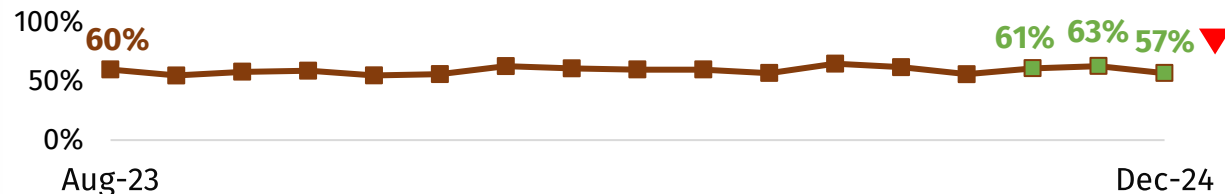
Base: All in December 2024 (n=2,036), November (n=2,022), October (n=2,008), September (n=2,014), August (n=2,008), July (n=2,070), June (n=2,056), May (n=2,067), April (n=2,061), March (n=2,015), February (n=2,066), January (n=2,038), December (n=2,026), November (n=2,064), October (n=2,062), September (n=2,057), August (n=2,044) and July 2023 (n=2,085)

The new data points (from October to December) are shown in a different colour

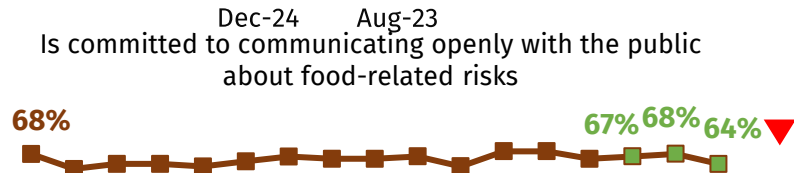
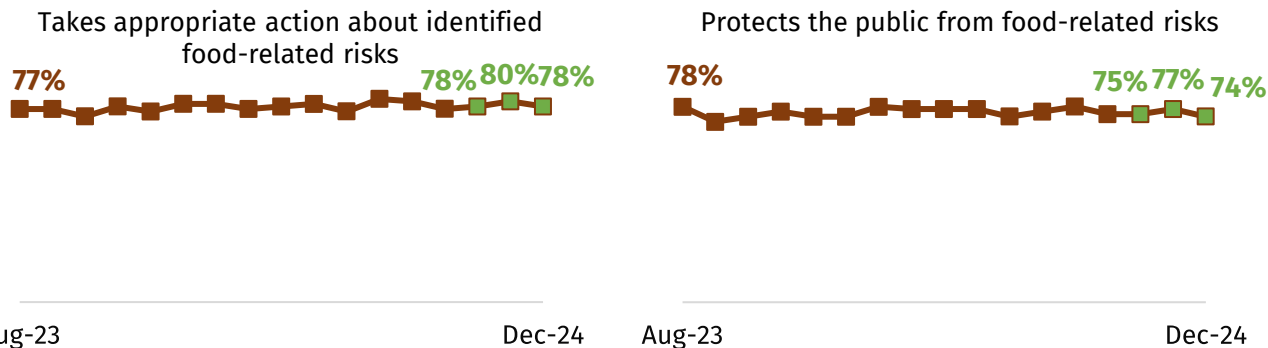
**Trust in the FSA rose in October and November 2024 but has decreased in December 2024 to 57%. This is comparable to September 2024.**

**Confidence in the FSA to communicate openly with the public about food-related risks has decreased slightly in December 2024 (to 64%) compared to November 2024 (68%). This is comparable to September 2024 (67%).**

**Proportion who trust the FSA to do its job**  
(among those with knowledge of the FSA)



**Proportion who reported confidence that the FSA...**  
(among those with knowledge of the FSA)



▲ ▼ Statistically significant differences compared to November shown with arrows

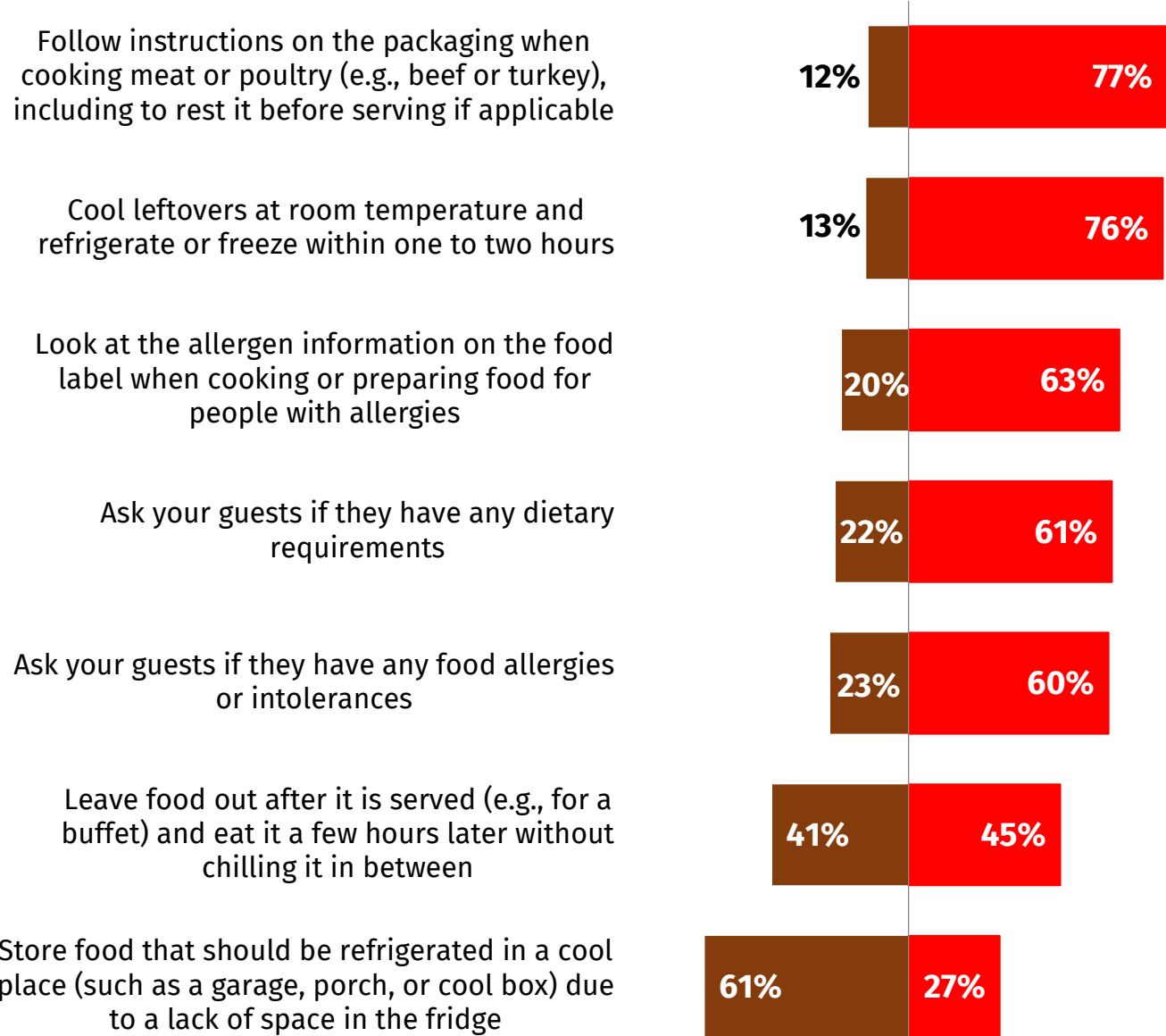
Q16. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is the Government Agency responsible for food safety in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. How much do you trust or distrust the Food Standards Agency to do its job? That is to make sure that food is safe and what it says it is.

Q15. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is the Government Agency responsible for food safety in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. How confident are you that the Food Standards Agency...

Base: Those who know a little / a lot about the FSA in December 2024 (n=1,193), November (n=1,139), October (n=1,173) September (n=1,063), August (n=1,109), July (n=1,140), June (n=1,163), May (n=1,161), April (n=1,137), March (n=1,137), February (n=1,127) January (n=1,168) December (n=1,134), November (n=1,183), October (n=1,175), September (n=1,161) and August 2023 (n=1,126)

Proportion who reported being likely and not likely to do the following over the festive period or another special occasion

■ Likely ■ Unlikely



In November 2024, just under half (45%) of respondents said they would leave food out after it is served and eat it in a few hours without chilling, while around a quarter (27%) would store food that should be refrigerated in another cool place such as a garage, porch or cool box

Oxmas\_2. Now thinking about if you were cooking or preparing food at home for others, for example over the festive period or another special occasion, how likely or unlikely would you be to...

Base: All in November 2024 (n=2,022)



# Background and methodological information

## Changes in approach

Following a [review](#) by the FSA's Advisory Committee for Social Science (ACSS), the Consumer Insights Tracker transitioned to a new supplier, YouGov, in July 2023. This change allowed for methodological updates, meaning data from YouGov (July 2023 onwards) should not be directly compared to data from the previous supplier (April 2020 – June 2023). For more details, please refer to the [technical report](#).

## Topics

This report presents findings for topics we track regularly including consumer concerns in relation to food, food affordability, and confidence in the FSA as a regulator. In this report we have included additional findings from the November survey on food safety over the festive period.

Between October and December 2024, questions were also asked about cell-cultivated products (Oct), peanut contamination of mustard (Oct), ocean bound plastics (Nov), ashwagandha (Nov), food safety behaviours (Nov), consumption of CBD (Dec), BPA (Dec), Listeria (Dec) and consumer views on food regulations (Oct-Dec). Data for these questions can be found in the accompanying [data tables](#).

## Method

- This research was conducted online using the YouGov panel which gives access to 400,000 active panel members in the UK.
- This report presents findings from the months October – December 2024. Where appropriate, comparisons are made to previous waves since July 2023.
- Across England, Wales and Northern Ireland 2,008 took part in the survey in October (3<sup>rd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>), 2,022 in November (1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>) and 2,036 in December 2024 (6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>).
- Quotas were set by age, gender, education and region. The data is also weighted to be representative of the population by these demographic variables. All results are based on final weighted data.

## Notes for interpretation

- Figures may not add up to 100% on graphs due to rounding, or in some questions, respondents were able to select multiple answers.
- Significance testing is applied to the data to compare and determine whether a difference is “real”, or if it has occurred by chance (because not everyone in the population has been surveyed).
- Any differences between demographic groups and month to month which are reported (with arrows) are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.
- Further information on the statistical significance testing can be found in the [technical report](#).

# For more information:

Visit our [Consumer Insights Tracker Webpage](#)

View the [Consumer Insights Tracker data tables](#)

Or please contact the FSA Social Science team  
([analysis@food.gov.uk](mailto:analysis@food.gov.uk))