Introduction to FOOD seminar series

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Centre for Decision Research
Example Projects

- Public perceptions of climate change and weather (funded by DEFRA/Ricardo AEA)
- Public preparedness for heat waves (funded by UK Economic & Social Research Council and US National Science Foundation)
- Helping consumers in financial distress (funded by EU Marie Curie International Incoming Fellowship)
- Informing consumer decisions about food (seminar series funded by UK Economic & Social Research Council)
1. Improve nutrition
   - Unhealthy food choices lead to 62% of UK adults being overweight or obese, costing NHS more than £5 billion per year

2. Improve food safety
   - 17 million cases of foodborne illnesses in the UK per year, including 20,000 hospitalizations and 500 deaths

3. Reduce food waste
   - UK households produce 4.2 million tonnes of preventable food waste per year
1. Consumers’ perceptions of food-related health messages
2. Consumers’ perceptions of food-related safety messages

Food safety: No guarantees

205 people were sickened by E. coli and five died after eating fresh spinach last September. The victims included 2-year-old Kyle Allgood of Chubbuck, Idaho.

NHS choices

Barbecue food safety

Food poisoning cases double over the summer, so remember these simple steps to help keep food safe.

Food poisoning is usually mild, and most people get better within a week. But sometimes it can be more severe, even deadly, so it’s important to take the risks seriously. Children, older people and those with weakened immune systems are particularly vulnerable to food poisoning.

“The safest option is to cook food indoors using your oven,” says a spokesperson from the Food Standards Agency (FSA).

“You can then put the cooked food outside on the barbecue for flavour.” This can be an easier option if you’re cooking for a lot of people at the same time.

If you are only cooking on the barbecue, the two main risk factors are:

- undercooked meat
3. Consumers’ perceptions of food-related waste-reduction messages
1. Helping people to make decisions despite complexity
   - Recommendation: Involve diverse team of experts

2. Creating messages that consumers understand
   - Recommendation: Conduct research with intended audience

3. Avoiding messages with unintended consequences
   - Test interventions before widespread dissemination
Guides and recommendations


Seminar Series on Food Options, Opinions and Decisions (FOOD): Integrating perspectives on consumer perceptions of food safety, nutrition and waste

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Dr. SIAN THOMAS (Co-I), Food Standards Agency
Dr. TOM QUESTED (Co-I), Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP)
1. To build a network of academics and practitioners working on nutrition, food safety, and food waste

2. To promote new research and outreach activities

3. To identify strategies for informing consumers’ food choices