



Family Food 2013: UK household food and drink purchases and derived nutrient intakes

Today Defra published [Family Food 2013](#), a report on the 2013 Family Food Module of the Living Costs and Food Survey. The report provides statistics on food purchases by type of food and includes estimates of nutrient content. The Family Food Survey covers around 6,000 households across the United Kingdom each year. Foods are reported at a detailed level and demographic patterns and trends are identified.

[Family Spending](#) is a separate report on the Living Costs and Food Survey published by the Office for National Statistics. It covers all forms of household expenditure but without as much detail on food and without quantities and nutrient content of food purchases.

Overview

- In 2013 average household expenditure on all food and drink was £42.18 per person per week. Taking inflation into account, this was 1.6 per cent less than 2012 and 3.9 per cent less than 2010.



- In the UK an average 11.4 per cent of all household spend went on food in 2013. For the lowest 20 per cent of households by equivalised income it was 16.5 per cent.
- Purchases of various household food types are on a clear short term downward trends since 2010, including, carcass and non-carcass meat, potatoes, vegetables, bread,

Enquiries to: David Lee, Food Statistics team, Defra, Area 3A, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London SW1P 3JR
Tel: +44 (0)20 7238 4852 email: david.lee@defra.gsi.gov.uk

A National Statistics publication. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference. Further information on National Statistics can be found on the [UK Statistics Authority website](#).

beverages and alcoholic drinks. Purchases of eggs are on a short term upwards trend in this period.

- The amount of food eaten out has been declining since 2001, with the largest decreases since 2010 in biscuits and chocolate, yoghurt and fromage frais, confectionary and alcoholic drinks.
- Total energy intake from all food and drink is on a long term downward trend. Intake is still around 5 per cent higher than the Estimated Average Requirement for adult intakes.
- All vitamin and mineral intakes except potassium reached at least 100 per cent of the recommended minimum Reference Nutrient Intake, where one is set.
- The average intake of sodium is on a downward trend but was still 79 per cent above the recommended maximum Reference Nutrient Intake of 2.4 grams per day in 2013.

Expenditure

- In real terms, between 2010 and 2013 household spending on food and drink fell by 3.2 per cent and eating out expenditure by 5.6 per cent. Household spending on alcoholic drinks fell by 5.7 per cent over the same period, whilst that bought for consumption outside the home fell by 13.4 per cent.
- The percentage of spend on food continues to be highest for low income households, at 16.5 per cent in 2013. Food is the largest item of household expenditure for low income households, after housing, fuel and power costs.
- On average, UK households purchased 6.1 per cent less food in 2013 than in 2007 while spending 20 per cent more. They saved 5.6 per cent on their unit prices by 'trading down' to cheaper products of the same type.
- Households in income decile 1 (lowest income group) spent 22 per cent more on food in 2013 than in 2007 and purchased 6.7 per cent less. Trading down saved these households 1.0 per cent.

Table 1: Main consumer reaction to high food prices between 2007 and 2013

Main consumer reaction - 2013					
	Trading down	Buying more	Buying less	Spending less	Spending more
All households	Cereals (-12%)	Eggs	Beef		Cereals
Trading down (-5.6%)	Biscuits & cakes (-11%)	Butter	Lamb		Poultry
Buying less (-6.1%)	Pork (-23%)		Fish		Butter
Spending more (+20%)	Fish (-10%)		Tea		Cheese
	Butter (-11%)		Potatoes		Eggs
	Sweets & chocolates (-13%)		Fruit		Coffee & hot drinks
			Alcoholic drinks		Soft drinks
					Sugar & preserves
					Sugar & preserves

	Trading down	Buying more	Buying less	Spending less	Spending more
Income decile 1	Cereals (-9%)	Sugar & preserves	Beef		Cereals
Trading down (-1.0%)	Pork (-15%)	Eggs	Pork		Pork
Buying less (-6.7%)	Fish (-6%)	Fish	Bacon		Poultry
Spending more (+22%)	Butter (-8%)	Cheese	Butter		Eggs
	Eggs (-8%)	Sweets	Milk		Coffee & hot drinks
	Milk (-5%)		Soft Drinks		Soft drinks
	Sweets & chocolates (-13%)		Potatoes		Sugar & preserves
	Fruit (-6%)		Fruit		Alcoholic drinks

(a) a positive value indicates trading up

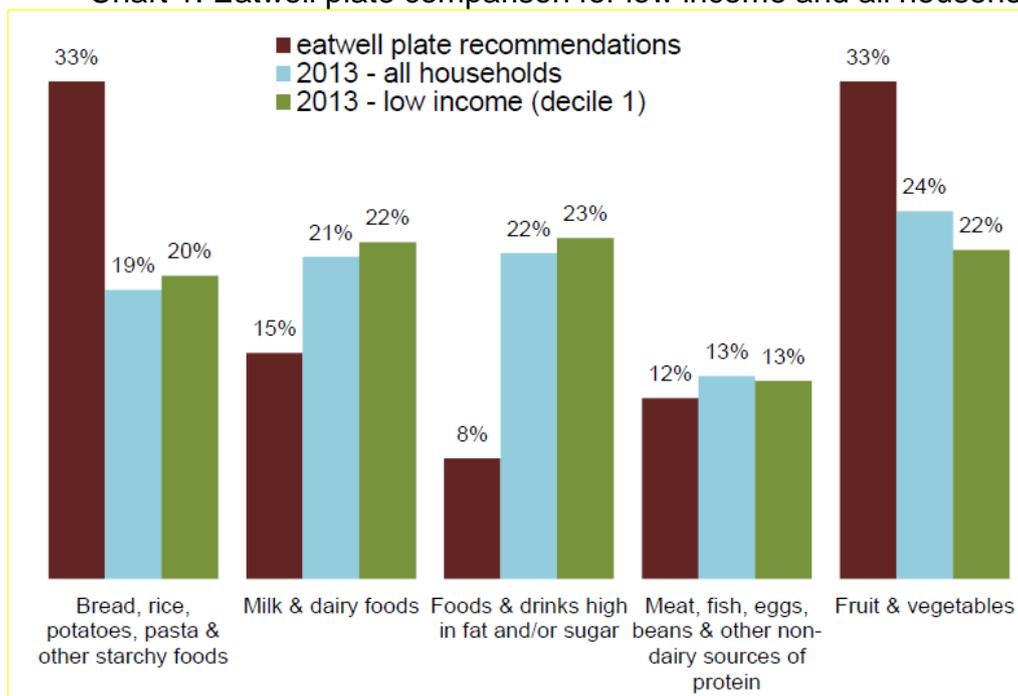
Purchases

The report focuses mainly on trends over the period 2010-2013.

- Household food purchases do not generally match the Government recommended Eatwell plate proportions of the types of food which make up a well balanced diet. Both low income households and all households have a relatively similar diet in terms of the eatwell plate categories.
- Purchases of soft drinks (not low calorie) are on a downward trend since 2010 and fell by 23 per cent between 2010 and 2013. This was mirrored by an upward trend in low calorie soft drinks' with household purchases 36 per cent higher in the same period.
- Butter purchases have been increasing steadily over the last ten years, and were 6.1 per cent higher than in 2010.
- Purchases of raw carcass meat have been on a downward trend since 2010, falling by 14 per cent. Beef, which accounts for around half of raw carcass meat purchases, showed a downward trend, declining by 7.2 per cent on 2012, 15.3% on 2010. All types of beef generally show a fall in purchases since 2010. Purchases of pork show no statistical trend but were 4.2 per cent down on 2010, and 8.1 per cent down on 2012.

- Potato purchases continued their long term downward trend, with a 8.2 per cent reduction since 2010. Purchases are 21 per cent lower than ten years ago. The reduction in recent years is driven by a decline in purchases of fresh potatoes. Around four fifths of the purchases of processed potatoes were chips and crisps and these have been relatively stable over the last ten years.
- While overall purchases of fruit and vegetables reduced between 2010 and 2013, consumers spent 6.7 per cent more on fresh and processed vegetables and 9.2 per cent more on fresh and processed fruit.

Chart 1: Eatwell plate comparison for low income and all households



Dietary Trends

The report focuses mainly on trends over the period 2010-2013.

- Total energy intake per person was an average of 2192 kcal per person per day in 2012, 4.4 per cent lower than in 2010. This is a statistically significant downward trend that confirms the longer term downward trend already apparent since the mid 1960s. Intake is still around 5 per cent higher than the Estimated Average Requirement.
- Energy intake from eating out was 220 kcal per person per day in 2013, 14.7 per cent lower than in 2010. Average energy intake from eating out accounted for 10 per cent of total energy intake.
- Over the three years from 2010 to 2013, intake of unsaturated fatty acids showed a downward trend. Mono-unsaturated fatty acids declined by 3.4 per cent, while intakes of polyunsaturates fell by 6.4 per cent.

- Fibre intake in 2013 was unchanged on 2012, at an average of 14.4 grams per person per day. This was a 5.4 per cent fall from 2010. The COMA recommendation is for an average of 18 grams of fibre intake per person per day for adults
- Since 2010 alcohol intake has been on a downward trend. Eating out purchases accounted for 22 per cent of total alcohol intake in 2013. In 2013, eating out intakes of alcohol were 25 per cent lower than in 2010 and showing a significant downward trend.

Further information

- 1) The statistics in this Notice are supported by comprehensive spreadsheet datasets available on the Defra website [here](#).
- 2) Method notes explaining the survey design are available on the Defra website [here](#).
- 3) Family Spending is a related report produced by the Office for National Statistics covering all household expenditure as collected in the Living Costs and Food Survey. It is available [here](#).

Notes for editors

- 1) The estimates are derived from the Family Food Module of the Living Costs and Food Survey run in Great Britain by the Office for National Statistics and Defra and in Northern Ireland by the Central Survey Unit of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA).
- 2) Historical estimates are derived from the National Food Survey run by Defra, which terminated in 2000.
- 3) Energy and nutrient intakes are derived from purchases of food and drink assuming no waste. Nutrient profiles are established by Public Health England for each of about 500 categories of food and drink based on the edible content.
- 4) Under-reporting is a problem with all dietary surveys but is considered to be lower in the Family Food Module. Its focus on all expenditure, with most food items collected from till receipts reduces the scope for under-reporting of household purchases.
- 5) Household food covers all food and drink purchases brought into the home. Items are recorded in the form they are purchased; for example, eggs purchased and later used to make a cake will be recorded under eggs and not under cakes. However, if a ready-made cake is purchased, it is recorded under cakes.
- 6) From time to time modifications are made to the coding framework and the nutrient profiles for food and drink items and to procedures used in assigning foods and drinks to codes.

In 2013 changes were made to the codes for canned peas, canned butter beans and kidney beans, reduced sugar baked beans, canned chick peas, canned sweetcorn, canned carrots, sliced and unsliced white bread, sliced and unsliced brown bread, fortified and unfortified soft grain bread, granary and wholemeal bread, brown and white bread rolls, French bread and rolls, reduced calorie and Danish bread, pitta bread, garlic bread, naan bread, ciabatta and bagels, high-fibre breakfast cereals, sweetened breakfast cereals, corn and corn/rice flake breakfast cereals, pizzas, reduced fat cheddar cheese, spreadable butter, soft margarines, reduced fat spreads, hard, baking margarines and fats, lard, suet and compound cooking fats.

These changes are not backdated and can appear as anomalous changes in purchases or intakes.

- 7) Income deciles divide the UK household population into ten equally sized groups based on the magnitude of their equivalised income. Equivalised income is calculated using the OECD-modified equivalence scale which assigns a value of 1 to the first household member, of 0.5 to each additional adult and of 0.3 to each child. Equivalised income is gross household income divided by the OECD scale value.