



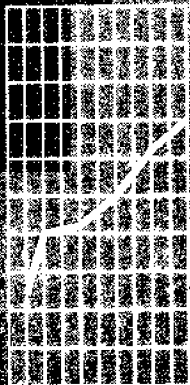
NEW ISSUE

October 1996

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Food Safety

Tasmania



NOTES

SYMBOLS AND OTHER * subject to sampling variability between 25% and 50%—should be used with
USAGES caution
** data suppressed due to high relative standard error giving unreliable
estimates
— nil or rounded to zero

INQUIRIES

For information about other ABS statistics and services, please refer to the back of this publication.

For further information about these statistics, contact Chris Carswell on (03) 6220 5858.

Denis W. Rogers
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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS: TASMANIA

FOOD SAFETY CONCERNS

More than two-thirds of Tasmanians aged 15 and over, an estimated 248,900 persons (69.4%), have no concerns about the food they eat.

An estimated 109,600 Tasmanians aged 15 and over (30.6%) are concerned about the food they eat. Of those concerned, the presence of chemicals/pesticides is the main concern of approximately 28,400 persons (25.9%), while a further 20,600 persons (18.8%) identified additives as their main concern.

Approximately 60.4% of the population believe that some foods are more likely to pose a health risk than others. Takeaway/restaurant food (29.6%), processed meat (27.3%) and poultry (23.7%) were the foods most commonly associated with a higher level of risk.

ATTITUDES TO FOOD REGULATORY ACTIVITIES

Testing and maintenance

Most Tasmanians believe food safety is either very effectively or effectively maintained by manufacturers and food sellers (85.9% and 79.3% respectively). Regular testing of food is considered to be very important or important by 98.3% of persons, while 99.0% consider regular inspections of food manufacturing and food selling premises necessary.

Food safety plan

Adoption of a government-approved safety plan by food sellers may result in increased patronage, as 86.1% of the Tasmanian population aged 15 and over would be more likely to purchase food from such premises.

ACTIONS IF FOOD FOUND UNFIT TO EAT

Most Tasmanians considered that they would return food and complain (65.0%), throw away the food and take no further action (19.6%) or contact the shop and complain (14.7%) if they purchased food later found to be unfit to eat.

However, it would appear people tend to under report the likelihood of throwing away food without complaint. Of those persons actually purchasing food later found unfit to eat, 32.6% threw away the food and took no further action.

FOOD POISONING

In the three months prior to the October 1996 survey, an estimated 23,100 persons suffered from an illness they believed to be due to food or non-alcoholic drinks consumed. Most of these persons (20,300) did not consult a doctor about their illness.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS: TASMANIA *continued*

FOOD SAFETY IN THE HOUSEHOLD

Home-prepared food

Home-prepared food is regarded as being safer than takeaway food by an estimated 84.6% of the population. This perception generally increases with age. It is lowest among persons aged 15–24 years (76.8% of persons aged 15–24 years) and highest among persons aged 65 and over (90.6% of persons aged 65 and over).

Cooked meat safety

An estimated 52.3% of the Tasmanian population aged 15 and over believe red meat that remains red after cooking is not safe to eat. This compares with 90.3% of the Tasmanian population who regard poultry that is still red after cooking as unsafe to eat. Both women and those in older age groups are more likely to consider red meat unsafe to eat if it remains red, than are men and those in younger age groups. Women are also more likely to consider poultry which remains red after cooking as unsafe to eat.

Thawing practices

There are three main thawing practices employed by Tasmanians who prepare household food and use frozen foods. An estimated 148,300 persons (45.6%) cover the frozen food and leave it at room temperature, 92,100 persons (28.3%) thaw frozen food in the refrigerator and 62,400 persons (19.2%) thaw frozen food in a microwave oven. An estimated 5,600 Tasmanians aged 15 and over do not thaw frozen food before cooking it.

Food hygiene practices

Most persons who prepare household food employ food hygiene practices regularly. Approximately 81.5% of women who prepare household food always wash knives and chopping boards when preparing different types of food, compared with 68.4% of men. An estimated 95.4% of those persons who prepare household food either usually or always wash their hands prior to preparing food, while 89.8% never store cooked and uncooked meats together.

Tea towels are used by 208,400 persons who prepare food and wash and dry dishes (64.0%), while the remainder leave dishes to drain dry or use a dishwasher (36.0%).

ATTITUDES TO SAFETY OF HOUSEHOLD DRINKING WATER

Consumption

Household drinking water is considered to be either very safe or safe to consume by an estimated 85.9% of Tasmanians aged 15 and over. An estimated 70.9% of persons either don't know or do not consider commercially bottled water to be safer to drink than household drinking water.

Treatment

Of those who regularly treat household drinking water (an estimated 89,100 Tasmanians aged 15 and over), boiling (62,200) and filtering (27,300) are the main methods employed.

TABLE 1. WHETHER CONCERNED ABOUT FOODS CONSUMED, ALL CONCERNS AND MAIN CONCERN ('000)

Concern about foods consumed	Sex		Age					65 and over	Total
	Male	Female	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64		
Whether concerned about foods consumed									
Yes	51.7	57.9	18.7	19.4	27.6	21.3	9.2	13.4	109.6
No	125.3	123.5	46.9	47.3	43.9	37.5	31.1	42.1	248.9
Concerns about foods consumed (a)									
Additives	17.4	24.6	5.4	7.0	12.2	10.6	4.0	* 2.8	42.0
Chemicals/pesticides	17.9	23.6	4.1	6.1	12.9	10.9	3.7	3.9	41.6
Freshness	14.7	15.9	5.8	4.6	8.4	7.4	* 1.4	* 2.9	30.5
Nutritional value	13.9	11.5	6.5	3.7	5.8	4.2	* 2.7	* 2.5	25.4
Contamination	9.0	10.3	* 2.9	3.2	5.3	4.8	**	* 2.5	19.4
Price paid	7.1	11.2	4.8	* 2.3	5.7	* 2.8	* 1.1	* 1.6	18.3
Bacteria	5.1	6.5	3.4	* 2.5	3.2	* 1.4	**	**	11.6
Storage	3.7	3.9	* 2.0	**	* 2.9	* 1.2	**	**	7.6
Amount/variety	* 1.9	* 2.5	* 1.8	* 0.9	* 1.1	**	**	**	4.3
Production and processing techniques	* 1.8	**	---	* 0.9	**	**	**	**	* 2.4
Lack of labelling information	**	* 0.9	---	---	**	**	**	**	* 1.2
Other	* 2.5	3.8	* 1.1	* 1.3	* 1.6	* 1.0	**	* 0.9	6.3
Main concern about foods consumed									
Chemicals/pesticides	12.4	15.9	3.0	4.0	8.0	7.2	* 2.9	3.2	28.4
Additives	9.3	11.3	* 2.3	4.2	6.4	4.3	* 2.0	* 1.4	20.6
Nutritional value	9.0	7.1	4.2	* 2.3	* 2.8	* 2.9	* 2.0	* 1.8	16.1
Freshness	7.4	7.0	3.4	* 2.6	3.7	* 2.4	**	* 1.9	14.3
Contamination	4.1	4.4	* 1.2	* 1.7	* 1.9	* 1.5	**	* 2.1	8.5
Price paid	* 2.6	5.4	* 1.2	* 1.3	* 1.8	* 1.6	**	* 1.5	7.9
Bacteria	* 1.8	* 2.4	* 1.3	* 1.6	**	**	**	---	4.1
Other	5.3	4.4	* 1.9	* 1.7	* 2.2	* 1.3	* 1.0	* 1.5	9.6
Total	177.1	181.4	65.6	66.8	71.6	58.8	40.3	55.5	358.5

(a) Components do not add to totals as a person could have more than one concern.

TABLE 2. ATTITUDE TO SAFETY OF AVAILABLE FOOD (per cent)

Sex and age	Very safe	Safe	Unsafe	Don't know	Total
Sex					
Male	31.7	61.3	4.2	2.8	100.0
Female	22.8	67.5	5.4	4.2	100.0
Age					
15-24	27.6	67.3	2.2	2.9	100.0
25-34	25.4	67.7	4.2	2.6	100.0
35-44	36.6	54.6	6.2	2.5	100.0
45-54	24.8	68.1	4.1	3.0	100.0
55-64	24.9	65.0	7.4	2.7	100.0
65 and over	21.1	65.5	5.6	7.7	100.0
Total	27.2	64.4	4.8	3.5	100.0

TABLE 3. PERCEIVED HEALTH RISK ASSOCIATED WITH SOME AVAILABLE FOODS
(*000)

Perceived health risk	Sex		Age					65 and over	Total
	Male	Female	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64		
Whether some available foods pose health risk									
Yes	101.4	115.0	36.3	40.0	48.0	40.4	21.5	30.3	216.4
No	66.2	59.2	25.7	23.6	21.4	17.3	17.5	19.9	125.4
Don't know	9.6	7.2	3.6	3.2	* 2.2	* 1.2	* 1.3	5.3	16.8
Which available foods more likely to pose health risk (a)									
Takeaway/restaurant	32.7	31.4	11.5	12.7	13.9	12.3	6.3	7.2	64.0
Processed meat	29.3	29.8	7.3	11.2	17.5	13.1	4.1	6.0	59.1
Poultry	18.6	32.7	7.7	7.2	13.7	9.2	5.7	7.9	51.4
Red meat	11.8	20.1	6.8	5.6	7.7	5.6	* 2.6	3.5	31.9
Shellfish	15.9	15.8	5.6	5.0	7.2	5.1	4.4	4.5	31.7
Scalefish	12.7	16.1	* 2.6	5.2	6.1	6.0	4.4	4.4	28.8
Canned/frozen food	9.7	11.9	4.7	3.2	* 2.5	3.9	* 2.8	4.4	21.6
Pork	6.4	8.9	* 1.0	* 2.3	3.9	3.0	* 1.6	3.5	15.3
Fruit and vegetables	6.6	8.5	* 1.4	* 2.9	3.6	4.2	* 1.2	* 1.7	15.1
Dairy foods	5.1	8.0	* 2.4	* 2.3	3.7	* 2.2	* 1.0	* 1.5	13.1
Other processed foods	* 1.9	* 2.6	* 1.1	* 1.1	* 0.9	* 1.0		**	4.5
Peanuts and peanut products	* 1.0	* 1.0	**	* 1.0	**	**	**	—	* 2.0
Sweets and confectionery	**	* 0.9		**	**	**	—	—	* 1.1
Other	3.0	* 1.9	* 0.9		* 0.9	**	* 0.9	* 1.5	4.9
Total	177.1	181.4	65.6	66.8	71.6	58.8	40.3	55.5	358.5

(a) Components do not add to totals as a person could have more than one concern.

TABLE 4. WHETHER CONCERNED ABOUT TAKEAWAY FOOD, ALL CONCERNS AND MAIN CONCERN
(*000)

Concern about takeaway food	Sex		Age					65 and over	Total
	Male	Female	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64		
Whether ever have concerns about purchasing takeaway foods									
Don't purchase takeaway food	24.0	30.7	* 1.5	* 1.0	4.0	8.0	11.6	28.6	54.7
Yes	100.8	105.6	38.2	49.6	47.1	37.3	18.2	16.0	206.4
No	51.8	44.2	25.8	15.9	19.9	13.1	10.5	10.8	96.0
Don't know	**	* 0.9	**	**	**	**	—	**	* 1.4
Concerns about purchasing takeaway foods (a)									
Freshness of the food	46.6	50.5	19.2	26.6	20.2	16.6	8.7	5.8	97.1
Food preparation/handling methods	38.3	46.7	13.1	19.6	21.6	15.0	9.1	6.5	85.0
Cleanliness of the food preparation area	30.7	29.0	9.3	12.0	19.0	8.9	5.7	4.8	59.7
Cleanliness of the person serving	27.6	30.5	12.1	10.6	15.8	9.6	6.4	3.5	58.0
Cleanliness of the shop	29.6	27.0	12.0	12.6	14.3	10.7	3.6	3.4	56.6
Nutritional value/composition of food	23.5	27.0	11.7	10.1	12.1	8.8	4.5	3.2	50.4
Cleanliness of equipment	18.4	21.2	5.8	8.1	11.7	7.4	3.4	3.2	39.6
Temperature of food	16.8	19.5	5.3	7.3	10.0	8.9	* 2.9	* 1.9	36.3
Amount/variety/price	4.4	4.7	* 2.0	* 2.2	3.1	* 1.2	**	**	9.0
Other	3.4	* 2.1	* 1.4	* 0.9	* 1.4	* 1.0	**	**	5.5
Main concern about purchasing takeaway foods									
Freshness of the food	29.5	25.4	12.0	16.0	10.4	9.5	3.6	3.5	55.0
Food preparation/handling methods	20.1	25.6	6.0	10.0	11.1	9.0	5.9	3.8	45.7
Nutritional value/composition of food	14.6	15.0	6.7	4.7	6.7	6.2	* 2.9	* 2.4	29.7
Cleanliness of the food preparation area	11.2	10.0	* 2.7	5.9	6.3	* 2.6	* 1.5	* 2.3	21.2
Cleanliness of the shop	11.2	8.5	4.3	5.8	4.4	* 2.4	* 1.4	* 1.3	19.7
Cleanliness of the person serving	7.1	7.9	3.1	3.8	3.5	* 2.1	* 1.6	* 0.9	15.0
Temperature of food	3.4	7.7	* 1.4	* 1.5	3.1	3.7	**	* 1.0	11.1
Cleanliness of equipment	* 1.1	* 2.9	**	* 0.9	**	* 1.3	**	**	4.0
Amount/variety/price	**	**	**	**	**	—	—	—	* 1.3
Other	* 1.6	* 1.9	* 1.2	**	**	**	**	**	3.6
Total	177.1	181.4	65.6	66.8	71.6	58.8	40.3	55.5	358.5

(a) Components do not add to totals as a person could have more than one concern.

TABLE 5. WHETHER CONCERNED ABOUT FOOD SOLD IN SELF-SERVE SALAD BARS, ALL CONCERNS AND MAIN CONCERN ('000)

<i>Concerns about self-serve salad bars</i>	<i>Sex</i>		<i>Age</i>					<i>65 and over</i>	<i>Total</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>15-24</i>	<i>25-34</i>	<i>35-44</i>	<i>45-54</i>	<i>55-64</i>		
Whether concerned about food sold from self-serve salad bars									
Yes	99.6	127.6	40.1	42.3	48.5	40.0	26.1	30.1	227.2
No	76.5	51.3	25.1	24.0	22.5	18.5	13.2	24.6	127.8
Don't know	* 0.9	* 2.5	**	**	**	**	* 0.9	**	3.4
Concerns about food sold from self-serve salad bars (a)									
Handling by customers	64.7	90.8	29.0	29.3	32.8	29.0	17.5	18.0	155.5
Exposure to air	34.9	48.6	13.5	14.4	21.8	15.8	8.4	9.5	83.5
Freshness of the food	32.6	42.7	10.6	13.7	17.9	14.8	8.3	10.0	75.3
Food handling practices of seller	13.9	14.9	4.9	3.8	8.3	4.6	4.1	3.0	28.8
Cleanliness of equipment/serving area	11.2	15.4	6.4	4.3	7.3	4.1	* 2.4	* 1.9	26.6
Cleanliness of the shop	5.9	9.6	3.3	* 1.8	5.0	* 2.7	* 1.6	* 1.1	15.5
Nutritional value/composition of food	* 2.9	5.6	* 1.1	**	3.2	* 1.4	**	* 1.6	8.6
Food display and storage aspects	* 1.7	* 2.8	**	**	* 1.2	* 1.0	* 1.1	**	4.5
Price	* 1.0	* 1.3	**	**	**	**	**	**	* 2.4
General hygiene or health concerns	**	* 1.2	..	**	**	**	**	**	* 1.7
Other	**	**	..	**	**	..	**	**	* 0.9
Main concern about food sold from self-serve salad bars									
Handling by customers	50.4	67.9	25.0	23.4	23.3	18.7	12.8	15.2	118.3
Freshness of the food	18.3	23.3	5.0	7.3	8.9	8.6	5.7	6.0	41.6
Exposure to air	16.3	19.0	5.3	5.9	8.2	7.4	4.2	4.2	35.3
Food handling practices of seller	5.0	5.9	* 1.2	* 1.4	* 2.8	* 1.5	* 1.9	* 2.2	10.9
Cleanliness of equipment/serving area	5.4	* 2.9	* 1.6	* 2.4	* 1.5	* 1.2	* 0.9	**	8.3
Cleanliness of the shop	* 1.7	3.5	* 1.9	**	* 1.0	* 1.1	..	**	5.2
Nutritional value/composition of food	* 1.5	* 2.0	**	**	* 1.0	* 0.9	**	* 0.9	3.6
Food display and storage aspects	**	* 1.1	..	**	**	**	**	..	* 1.5
General hygiene or health concerns	**	* 1.1	..	**	**	**	* 1.4
Price	..	**	**	**
Other	**	**	..	**	**	..	**	**	* 1.1
Total	177.1	181.4	65.6	66.8	71.6	58.8	40.3	55.5	358.5

(a) Components do not add to totals as a person could have more than one concern.

TABLE 6. PERCEIVED MAINTENANCE OF FOOD SAFETY BY MANUFACTURERS AND FOOD SELLERS
(per cent)

<i>Sex and age</i>	<i>Perception of maintenance of food safety by manufacturers</i>				<i>Total</i>	<i>Perception of maintenance of food safety by food sellers</i>				<i>Total</i>
	<i>Very effective</i>	<i>Effective</i>	<i>Not effective</i>	<i>Don't know</i>		<i>Very effective</i>	<i>Effective</i>	<i>Not effective</i>	<i>Don't know</i>	
Sex										
Male	21.6	66.4	6.4	5.6	100.0	11.1	68.5	16.0	4.3	100.0
Female	17.6	66.1	8.6	7.7	100.0	9.3	69.7	17.6	3.4	100.0
Age										
15-24	15.1	70.4	6.9	7.6	100.0	8.7	72.4	13.2	5.7	100.0
25-34	24.4	65.6	7.2	2.8	100.0	11.3	72.2	14.6	1.8	100.0
35-44	22.6	63.0	7.3	7.1	100.0	12.0	66.6	18.3	3.2	100.0
45-54	19.0	66.5	8.2	6.3	100.0	7.6	69.2	21.6	1.6	100.0
55-64	18.4	66.9	7.8	6.9	100.0	10.2	65.2	20.6	4.0	100.0
65 and over	16.5	65.8	7.8	9.8	100.0	11.2	67.3	14.0	7.4	100.0
Total	19.6	66.3	7.5	6.7	100.0	10.2	69.1	16.8	3.9	100.0

TABLE 7. ATTITUDE TO REGULAR TESTING OF FOODS AND INSPECTIONS OF PREMISES
(per cent)

<i>Sex and age</i>	<i>Attitude to regular testing of foods</i>				<i>Total</i>	<i>Attitude to regular inspections of food manufacturing and food selling premises</i>				<i>Total</i>
	<i>Very important</i>	<i>Important</i>	<i>Not important</i>	<i>Don't know</i>		<i>Very important</i>	<i>Important</i>	<i>Not important</i>	<i>Don't know</i>	
Sex										
Male	81.6	16.0	0.7	1.6	100.0	81.5	17.0	0.6	1.1	100.0
Female	88.6	10.4	0.5	0.5	100.0	90.7	8.7	0.6	0.6	100.0
Age										
15-24	85.6	13.1	1.5	1.5	100.0	82.7	16.4	—	1.5	100.0
25-34	89.6	9.1	1.5	1.5	100.0	91.3	8.3	1.5	—	100.0
35-44	90.5	8.2	1.4	1.4	100.0	90.7	9.3	—	—	100.0
45-54	86.7	11.3	1.7	1.9	100.0	87.8	11.5	—	1.7	100.0
55-64	78.9	18.3	2.5	2.3	100.0	84.2	14.3	—	2.5	100.0
65 and over	75.1	22.7	1.8	1.8	100.0	78.1	18.8	1.8	2.1	100.0
Total	85.2	13.1	0.6	1.1	100.0	86.2	12.8	0.3	0.8	100.0

TABLE 8. PREMISES ADOPTING FOOD SAFETY PLANS
(per cent)

<i>Sex and age</i>	<i>How much more confident about the safety of food sold from premises adopting a government approved food safety plan</i>				<i>Total</i>	<i>Likely change in purchasing intentions toward food from premises adopting a government approved food safety plan</i>				<i>Total</i>
	<i>A lot more confident</i>	<i>A little more confident</i>	<i>No more confident</i>	<i>Don't know</i>		<i>A lot more likely</i>	<i>A little more likely</i>	<i>No more likely</i>	<i>Don't know</i>	
Sex										
Male	47.5	37.2	12.3	3.0	100.0	50.8	31.4	14.7	3.1	100.0
Female	50.2	36.6	10.7	2.5	100.0	59.4	30.5	7.5	2.6	100.0
Age										
15-24	44.7	46.6	6.8	1.9	100.0	52.9	33.8	10.0	3.3	100.0
25-34	53.6	35.9	9.0	1.5	100.0	57.4	32.9	8.4	1.3	100.0
35-44	47.2	38.9	11.8	2.0	100.0	57.6	28.1	12.0	2.3	100.0
45-54	49.6	34.6	13.4	2.4	100.0	58.6	30.7	8.3	2.4	100.0
55-64	48.3	30.9	16.1	4.7	100.0	55.3	25.6	16.6	2.5	100.0
65 and over	49.7	30.8	14.4	5.1	100.0	47.9	33.3	13.4	5.5	100.0
Total	48.8	36.9	11.5	2.8	100.0	55.1	31.0	11.1	2.8	100.0

TABLE 9. HOW OFTEN DELIBERATELY PURCHASE FOODS REDUCED IN PRICE FOR QUICK SALE
(*000)

<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Sex</i>		<i>Age</i>						<i>Total</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>15-24</i>	<i>25-34</i>	<i>35-44</i>	<i>45-54</i>	<i>55-64</i>	<i>65 and over</i>	
Always	3.8	6.9	3.1	* 1.8	* 2.0	* 1.3	* 1.4	* 1.1	10.8
Usually	16.8	12.9	10.2	4.6	4.4	5.2	* 1.4	3.8	29.7
Sometimes	90.0	113.3	30.1	42.4	43.1	33.9	23.4	30.4	203.3
Never	63.4	48.3	21.1	17.6	21.2	18.3	13.6	20.0	111.8
Other	3.0		* 1.1	**	* 0.8	**	**	**	3.0
Total	177.1	181.4	65.6	66.8	71.6	58.8	40.3	55.5	358.5

**TABLE 10. LIKELY ACTION IF FOOD PURCHASED WERE FOUND UNFIT TO EAT
(per cent)**

Likely action taken	Sex		Age						Total
	Male	Female	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 and over	
Contact the Health Department	3.8	3.0	5.1	2.1	1.7	3.5	3.9	4.9	3.4
Contact the local council	0.6	0.9	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.7	2.5	1.8	0.8
Return the food and complain	62.5	67.3	60.4	69.1	62.6	71.2	61.1	64.5	65.0
Contact the shop and complain	14.2	15.2	11.8	11.8	18.7	14.9	18.9	13.3	14.7
Ask for a refund	4.8	4.4	5.1	3.4	5.8	5.6	5.8	2.1	4.6
Throw away the food and take no further action	21.7	17.5	28.0	18.5	18.8	14.3	18.7	18.2	19.6
Other	1.1	0.6	1.5	1.5	1.4		2.5	1.8	0.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

**TABLE 11. PERSONS WHO PURCHASED FOOD LATER FOUND UNFIT TO EAT, JUL-OCT 1996: ACTIONS TAKEN
(^{'000})**

Action taken	Sex		Age						Total
	Male	Female	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 and over	
Contacted the Health Department	**		**	**					**
Contacted the local council									
Returned the food and complained	16.1	21.0	4.6	8.4	9.3	8.9	3.3	* 2.6	37.2
Contacted the shop and complained	3.2	4.2	* 1.2	* 1.0	**	* 1.9	* 1.3	* 1.3	7.4
Asked for a refund	3.1	* 2.3	* 0.9	* 1.2	* 1.1	* 1.7	**	**	5.4
Threw away the food and took no further action	11.0	11.3	5.1	4.4	5.8	3.3	* 2.2	* 1.6	22.3
Other	**	**	* 0.9			**			* 1.0
Total	31.5	36.9	11.9	13.9	15.7	14.4	6.8	5.7	68.4

**TABLE 12. PERSONS WHO SUFFERED FOOD OR NON-ALCOHOLIC DRINK RELATED ILLNESS, JUL-OCT 1996:
ACTIONS TAKEN
(^{'000})**

Actions taken	Sex		Age						Total
	Male	Female	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 and over	
Whether doctor consulted									
Yes	* 1.8	* 1.0	**	**	**	**		**	* 2.8
No	9.6	10.7	5.6	4.7	* 2.4	3.7	* 2.2	* 1.7	20.3
Whether cause of illness was confirmed by laboratory tests									
Yes	**	**	**		**				**
No	* 1.3	**	**	**	**	**		**	* 2.0
Don't know	**					**			**
Total	11.4	11.7	6.3	5.5	* 2.9	4.4	* 2.2	* 1.9	23.1

TABLE 13. ASSESSMENT OF SAFETY OF HOME PREPARED FOOD COMPARED WITH TAKEAWAY FOOD
(per cent)

<i>Assessment of relative safety of home prepared food</i>	<i>Sex</i>		<i>Age</i>						<i>Total</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>15-24</i>	<i>25-34</i>	<i>35-44</i>	<i>45-54</i>	<i>55-64</i>	<i>65 and over</i>	
Safer than takeaway food	82.8	86.4	76.8	82.2	83.9	89.7	86.6	90.6	84.6
As safe as takeaway food	15.7	12.9	21.8	16.6	15.3	9.8	13.1	6.9	14.3
Not as safe as takeaway food	0.6	0.6	1.5	1.5	1.4				0.3
Don't know	1.1	0.5	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.7	2.5	2.5	0.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

TABLE 14. ASSESSMENT OF SAFETY OF COOKED MEATS
(per cent)

<i>Sex and age</i>	<i>Assessment of safety of red meats which are still red after cooking</i>			<i>Total</i>	<i>Assessment of safety of poultry which is still red after cooking</i>			<i>Total</i>
	<i>Safe to eat</i>	<i>Not safe to eat</i>	<i>Don't know</i>		<i>Safe to eat</i>	<i>Not safe to eat</i>	<i>Don't know</i>	
Sex								
Male	45.0	47.8	7.2	100.0	7.7	87.4	4.9	100.0
Female	34.6	56.7	8.7	100.0	3.8	93.1	3.1	100.0
Age								
15-24	43.6	47.0	9.4	100.0	9.9	86.1	3.9	100.0
25-34	39.0	51.8	9.2	100.0	4.0	92.7	3.3	100.0
35-44	47.5	47.2	5.3	100.0	6.3	90.2	3.6	100.0
45-54	43.6	50.3	6.2	100.0	3.2	94.7	2.2	100.0
55-64	33.0	61.2	5.8	100.0	6.0	89.9	4.1	100.0
65 and over	27.0	61.4	11.6	100.0	4.7	88.2	7.1	100.0
Total	39.7	52.3	8.0	100.0	5.7	90.3	4.0	100.0

TABLE 15. PERSONS WHO PREPARE FOOD: SELECTED MEAT COOKING PRACTICES
(*'000)

<i>Selected meat cooking practices</i>	<i>Sex</i>		<i>Age</i>						<i>Total</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>15-24</i>	<i>25-34</i>	<i>35-44</i>	<i>45-54</i>	<i>55-64</i>	<i>65 and over</i>	
Whether cook out redness in red meats									
Don't cook red meat at home	4.4	5.5	* 1.8	* 2.0	* 1.4	* 1.2	**	* 2.8	9.9
Yes	90.1	130.4	36.1	43.1	43.5	36.2	24.7	36.9	220.5
Sometimes	22.9	19.3	10.7	7.9	8.5	7.1	3.6	4.3	42.1
No	33.4	24.0	10.4	10.0	14.3	12.0	6.2	4.6	57.3
Whether cook out redness in poultry									
Don't cook poultry at home	8.9	5.4	4.0	* 1.7	* 1.4	* 1.8	* 1.8	3.6	14.3
Yes	139.4	172.1	54.2	60.5	65.1	54.6	32.4	44.7	311.5
Sometimes	* 1.1	**	**	**	**	---	**	---	* 1.4
No	* 1.4	* 1.3	**	**	**	---	**	**	* 2.8
Total	150.7	179.2	59.1	62.9	67.6	56.4	35.2	48.6	329.9

TABLE 16. PERSONS WHO PREPARE MEALS USING FROZEN FOODS: USUAL THAWING PRACTICE
(*000)

<i>Usual thawing practice</i>	<i>Sex</i>		<i>Age</i>						<i>Total</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>15-24</i>	<i>25-34</i>	<i>35-44</i>	<i>45-54</i>	<i>55-64</i>	<i>65 and over</i>	
Uncovered at room temperature	6.1	5.2	* 1.2	4.5	**	* 1.5	* 0.9	* 2.6	11.3
Covered at room temperature	73.7	74.5	30.9	29.6	29.8	23.2	14.4	20.4	148.3
Soak in water	* 1.2	* 1.9	* 1.2	**	**	**	**		3.1
Use a microwave oven	30.7	31.7	13.7	13.4	13.1	9.8	6.8	5.6	62.4
In the refrigerator	31.5	60.7	9.0	14.3	21.1	18.6	11.8	17.4	92.1
Convection oven	**	**	**	**	—	—	—	**	**
Cook straight from freezer	* 2.7	* 2.9	**	**	* 1.5	* 1.7	**	* 1.0	5.6
Other	* 1.6	**	**	—	—	**	—	**	* 1.8
Total	147.7	177.5	57.3	62.7	66.8	55.9	34.9	47.5	325.2

TABLE 17. PERSONS WHO PREPARE HOUSEHOLD FOOD: SELECTED FOOD HYGIENE PRACTICES
(*000)

<i>Selected food hygiene practices in the home</i>	<i>Sex</i>		<i>Age</i>						<i>Total</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>15-24</i>	<i>25-34</i>	<i>35-44</i>	<i>45-54</i>	<i>55-64</i>	<i>65 and over</i>	
Frequency chopping boards and knives are washed between use for different types of food preparation									
Always	103.1	146.1	39.9	45.1	51.4	44.5	28.9	39.3	249.2
Usually	27.7	24.1	13.1	13.3	8.8	6.1	4.4	6.2	51.8
Sometimes	13.7	6.6	4.5	3.4	5.3	4.6	**	* 2.0	20.4
Never	6.2	* 2.3	* 1.6	* 1.2	* 2.1	* 1.2	* 1.4	* 1.0	8.5
Frequency cooked and uncooked meats are stored together in the same container or on the same plate									
Always	**	* 1.7	**	**	**	**	**	**	* 2.4
Usually	* 2.1	* 1.5	* 1.2	* 1.5	**	—	**	**	3.5
Sometimes	15.2	12.4	9.2	3.6	5.2	4.6	* 1.7	3.4	27.7
Never	132.7	163.6	48.2	57.7	61.8	51.3	32.8	44.6	296.3
Frequency hands are washed before preparing food									
Always	118.2	145.6	42.7	47.4	54.4	46.3	30.8	42.3	263.8
Usually	24.7	26.1	9.5	13.3	10.7	8.5	3.6	5.3	50.8
Sometimes	5.5	5.2	4.5	* 2.1	* 1.4	* 1.0	**	* 1.1	10.7
Never	* 2.2	* 1.4	* 1.9	**	* 1.0	**	**	—	3.6
Total	150.7	179.2	59.1	62.9	67.6	56.4	35.2	48.6	329.9

TABLE 18. PERSONS WHO PREPARE FOOD AND WASH AND DRY DISHES: METHOD USED TO DRY DISHES
(*000)

<i>Method used to dry dishes</i>	<i>Sex</i>		<i>Age</i>						<i>Total</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>15-24</i>	<i>25-34</i>	<i>35-44</i>	<i>45-54</i>	<i>55-64</i>	<i>65 and over</i>	
Tea towel	92.0	116.4	34.9	39.2	36.1	32.5	25.8	39.9	208.4
Leave to drain dry or leave in dishwasher	55.8	61.2	22.8	23.5	30.8	22.9	8.5	8.5	117.0
Total	147.8	177.6	57.7	62.7	66.9	55.4	34.3	48.4	325.4

TABLE 19. ASSESSMENT OF SAFETY OF DRINKING WATER
(per cent)

<i>Sex, age and main source of household drinking water</i>	<i>Attitude to household drinking water</i>					<i>Whether commercially bottled water is safer to drink than normal drinking water</i>			
	<i>Very safe</i>	<i>Safe</i>	<i>Unsafe</i>	<i>Don't know</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Don't know</i>	<i>Total</i>
	Sex								
Male	36.2	52.2	10.0	1.7	100.0	31.6	45.1	23.3	100.0
Female	28.1	55.3	12.7	3.9	100.0	26.6	48.8	24.6	100.0
Age									
15-24	24.6	60.0	14.4	1.5	100.0	50.4	38.8	10.8	100.0
25-34	30.9	56.5	9.8	2.8	100.0	34.8	43.5	21.7	100.0
35-44	32.3	53.6	10.5	3.6	100.0	23.1	53.3	23.6	100.0
45-54	38.8	48.8	9.7	2.7	100.0	23.1	50.6	26.4	100.0
55-64	33.7	50.9	13.6	2.5	100.0	24.4	50.6	25.0	100.0
65 and over	33.8	50.6	10.8	4.9	100.0	14.5	46.2	39.3	100.0
Main source of household drinking water									
Mains	28.0	56.7	12.4	2.9	100.0	29.7	45.5	24.7	100.0
Tank/roof water	53.4	40.3	3.6	2.6	100.0	21.4	57.6	21.0	100.0
River or creek	26.8	51.4	18.9	11.8	100.0	26.1	44.9	29.0	100.0
Commercially bottled	27.7	47.7	24.6	—	100.0	73.5	23.7	23.7	100.0
Other	48.0	39.8	19.5	19.5	100.0	41.7	47.4	19.5	100.0
Total	32.1	53.8	11.3	2.8	100.0	29.1	47.0	23.9	100.0

TABLE 20. HOUSEHOLDS: MAIN SOURCE OF DRINKING WATER AND KNOWLEDGE OF DRINKING WATER SAFETY ACTIONS ('000)

<i>Location of dwelling and knowledge of drinking water safety actions</i>	<i>Mains</i>	<i>Tank/roof water</i>	<i>River or creek</i>	<i>Commercially bottled</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>
Statistical division						
Greater Hobart and Southern	75.7	12.6	1.7	* 0.6	**	91.0
Northern	40.6	7.2	1.7	* 1.4	* 0.8	51.7
Mersey-Lyell	33.5	6.9	* 0.5	**	* 1.0	42.3
Area of location						
Urban	137.5	5.1	**	2.0	**	144.9
Rural	12.4	21.6	3.8	**	1.8	40.0
Whether enquiries have been made about the safety of drinking water						
Yes	7.5	2.1	* 0.9	**	* 0.9	11.5
No	139.8	24.3	2.9	1.9	* 1.2	170.2
Don't know	2.6	**	**	**	—	3.2
Whether drinking water has ever been analysed						
Yes	4.6	2.2	* 1.2	**	* 1.2	9.4
No	137.7	23.4	2.1	2.0	* 0.9	166.2
Don't know	7.6	* 1.1	* 0.6	**	—	9.3
Total	149.9	26.7	3.9	2.4	2.1	184.9

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1 This publication contains results from the 1996 Tasmanian State Supplementary Survey, Food Safety. The survey was conducted throughout the State in October 1996 as a supplement to the ABS Monthly Population Survey (MPS).

2 In October 1996, the Tasmanian State Supplementary Survey topic related to a series of food safety concerns. The survey was carried out at the request of the Department of Community and Health Services.

Respondents were asked about:

- attitudes to safety of Tasmanian food;
- attitudes to maintenance of food safety by manufacturers and food sellers;
- attitudes to food premises' inspection and food testing;
- general concerns about food safety;
- attitudes towards industry self-regulation of food safety;
- household food management practices;
- whether certain food safety protocols are being followed at home;
- illness occurrence in the previous three months, attributed to food or non-alcoholic drinks, visit to doctor and confirmation of illness;
- source of household drinking water; and
- attitudes towards drinking water safety and water quality.

KEY TERMS

3 The following terms are used in this publication:

- *Food safety considerations* focus on whether food is free from agents that may cause disease, particularly food poisoning.
- *Self-serve bars* are located at all types of retail outlets (e.g. supermarkets, restaurants, shops).
- *Foods reduced in price for a quick sale* applies to food purchased at retail outlets such as supermarkets, butcheries and bakeries. It does not include takeaway food.
- *Food unfit to eat* is food that the respondent, having decided it is unfit to eat, would not then consume.
- *Food sellers* include any establishment which sells food (e.g. bakeries, vans).

THE SAMPLE

4 Because the questions were supplementary to the October 1996 Labour Force Survey (LFS), the households sampled were the same. For more information on the sampling method used for the LFS, refer to paragraphs 5, 22 and 23 of the explanatory notes in *Labour Force, Australia* (Cat. no. 6203.0).

5 For this State supplementary survey, seven out of eight households selected in the LFS were included. One randomly selected person from each of those households was asked the food safety questions.

DATA ITEMS

6 The data items used in the tables in this publication were drawn from responses to the State supplementary questions. In addition, responses to the LFS questions were used to provide extra information with which to cross-classify survey responses. For example, the items *sex*, *age*, and *statistical regions* were derived from responses to questions asked in the LFS.

7 In some cases, additional unpublished cross-classifications of data items are available. A charge is made for providing unpublished information. Inquiries should be made to the Information Officer in Hobart on (03) 6222 5800.

**TABLE 21. PERSONS WHO REGULARLY TREAT HOUSEHOLD DRINKING WATER PRIOR TO CONSUMPTION:
SOURCE AND TREATMENT
('000)**

<i>Sex, age and main source of household drinking water</i>	<i>Boil</i>	<i>Filter</i>	<i>Chlorinate</i>	<i>Fluoridate</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Decant</i>	<i>Total</i>
Sex							
Male	24.7	12.8	**	—	—	**	37.4
Female	37.5	14.4				**	51.7
Age							
15-24	9.8	6.2	—	—	—	**	16.4
25-34	10.9	4.9					15.2
35-44	8.6	5.9				**	14.5
45-54	9.1	3.8	**	—	—	—	12.9
55-64	8.3	* 2.7	—	—	—	**	10.6
65 and over	15.5	3.7	**	—	—	—	19.5
Main source of household drinking water							
Mains	50.2	22.1		—	—	**	72.4
Tank/roof water	9.0	* 2.9	**	—	—	—	11.9
River or creek	* 1.4	* 1.0		—	—	—	* 2.4
Commercially bottled	**	**	—	—	—	—	* 1.0
Other	* 0.9	* 0.9	—	—	—	—	* 1.5
Total	62.2	27.3	**	—	—	**	89.1

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

THE ESTIMATES

8 Responses to survey questions were expanded with reference to an independently estimated distribution of the population aged 15 years and over, by age and sex. In October 1996, there were an estimated 358,500 civilian residents aged 15 years or more in private Tasmanian dwellings.

RELIABILITY OF THE ESTIMATES

9 Estimates in this publication are subject to two sources of error. These are non-sampling error and sampling error.

- Non-sampling errors may occur because of imperfections in reporting by respondents and interviewers, and errors made in coding and processing data. These inaccuracies may occur in any enumeration, whether it be a full count or a sample. Every effort is made to reduce the non-sampling error to a minimum by careful design of questionnaires, intensive training and supervision of interviewers, and efficient operating procedures.
- Sampling errors occur because the estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from occupants of a sample of dwellings. They may differ from the figures that would have been produced if all dwellings had been included in the survey. One measure of the likely difference is given by the *standard error*. This indicates the extent to which an estimate might have varied by chance because only a sample of dwellings was included. Another measure of sampling variability is the *relative standard error*, which is obtained by expressing the standard error as a percentage of the estimate to which it refers.

10 The standard errors and relative standard errors of estimates from this survey are summarised in Tables A and B (page 18 and 19).

11 There are about two chances in three that a sample estimate will differ by less than one standard error from the estimate that would have been obtained if all dwellings had been included, and about nineteen chances in twenty that the difference will be less than two standard errors. For example, there is an estimate in Table 1 of 109,600 persons aged 15 years or more who reported concern over the food they consumed. Table A shows that the standard error for this estimate is approximately 2,400. There are, therefore, about two chances in three that the actual number if everyone had been asked (the estimate) is between 107,200 and 112,000 and about nineteen chances in twenty that the actual number (the estimate) is between 104,800 and 114,400.

FLAGGING OF UNRELIABLE ESTIMATES

12 As Table A (page 18) shows, the smaller the estimate, the higher is the relative standard error. Very small estimates are subject to such high standard errors (relative to the size of the estimate) as to detract from their value for most reasonable purposes. In the tables in this publication, only estimates with relative standard errors of 25% or less, and percentages based on such estimates, are considered reliable for most purposes. Estimates with relative standard errors of between 25% and 50% have been included and prefaced with an asterisk to indicate that they should be used with caution. Cells with two asterisks have relative standard errors of over 50% and the estimates have been suppressed.

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

13 Users may also wish to refer to the following publications, which are available from ABS Bookshops:

- *Australia's Food and Nutrition* (Cat. no. 8904.0)
- *Australia's Health* (Cat. no. 8903.0)
- *National Nutrition Survey: Selected Highlights, Australia* (Cat. no. 4802.0)
- *Average Retail Prices of Selected Items: Eight Capital Cities* (Cat. no. 6403.0)
- *Apparent Consumption of Selected Foodstuffs, Australia, Preliminary* (Cat. no. 4315.0)
- *Apparent Consumption of Foodstuffs and Nutrients, Australia* (Cat. no. 4306.0)

TABLE A

Person Estimates

Size of estimate	Standard error	Relative standard error %
200	200	101.4
300	250	83.8
500	330	65.3
700	390	55.0
1 000	460	45.6
1 500	550	36.6
2 000	620	31.2
2 500	700	27.5
3 000	750	24.7
3 500	800	22.6
4 000	850	20.9
5 000	900	18.2
7 000	1 050	14.8
10 000	1 200	11.8
15 000	1 350	9.1
20 000	1 500	7.5
30 000	1 700	5.7
40 000	1 850	4.7
50 000	2 000	4.0
100 000	2 400	2.4
150 000	2 650	1.8
200 000	2 850	1.4
300 000	3 100	1.0
500 000	3 450	0.7

TABLE B

Household Estimates

<i>Size of estimate</i>	<i>Standard error</i>	<i>Relative standard error %</i>
100	90	93.5
200	140	68.8
300	170	56.9
500	220	44.3
700	260	37.3
1 000	310	30.9
1 500	370	24.8
2 000	420	21.1
2 500	470	18.6
3 000	500	16.8
3 500	540	15.3
4 000	570	14.1
5 000	600	12.4
7 000	700	10.1
10 000	800	8.0
15 000	950	6.2
20 000	1 000	5.1
30 000	1 150	3.9
40 000	1 250	3.2
50 000	1 350	2.7
100 000	1 650	1.6
150 000	1 800	1.2
200 000	1 950	1.0
300 000	2 100	0.7
500 000	2 350	0.5

For more information . . .

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