



Market Report

A Snapshot of your Marketing Sector

Fresh Food Retailing

This pack has been designed to provide information on setting up a business in the **Fresh Food Retailing** industry in Scotland, as well as helping to inform the market research section of your business plan. You can find more information on how to write a business plan from the Business Gateway website (www.bgateway.com/businessplan), including an interactive template and tips to get you started.

This market report was updated by Business Gateway in **May 2026**.

What do I need to know about the Fresh Food Retailing market?

The following summary statistics have been taken from market research reports and reliable resources that the Information Service uses to compile industry information. They should give you an indication of how your industry is faring at present and whether there is demand for your type of business:

- ◆ The UK fish & seafood market experienced healthy growth during 2020–25. In 2025, the market recorded a moderate growth and is expected to continue to record moderate growth over the forecast period of 2025–30. In 2025, the UK held a 6.8% share of the European fish & seafood market. The market growth during 2020–25 is driven by rising health awareness, shifts in dietary preferences toward protein & flexitarian eating, and its perceived health benefits, culinary versatility, and alignment with modern dietary preferences. Additionally, increased household incomes have driven consumer demand for healthier seafood options. (Global Explorer, *United Kingdom – Fish & Seafood, 2026, This content is reproduced under license from GlobalData PLC, Copyright 2026*).
- ◆ According to the Office for National Statistics (UK), in 2025, the net household disposable income in the UK grew by 4.8% from 2024. This rise in income enabled consumers to afford premium, protein-rich food options, particularly fish and seafood items, boosting the market growth. The UK fish & seafood market recorded revenues of \$6,622 million in 2025, and the value increased with a CAGR of 5.0% between 2020 and 2025. (Global Explorer, *United Kingdom – Fish & Seafood, 2026*)
- ◆ The UK retail sector has experienced a slow-but-steady recovery in demand through the first eight months of 2025, but inflation remains a significant headwind, particularly in the grocery sector. Food and non-alcoholic drink inflation reached 5.1% in August 2025, the highest rate since January 2024, before falling a little by October (4.9%). This persistent inflation is driven by a combination of higher business costs (including National Insurance and Extended Producer Responsibility), rising commodity prices, tariff impacts, and poor harvests. The impact has been most acutely felt among lower-income households, where spending is concentrated on essentials, but even higher-income groups show increased caution. (Mintel, *Supermarkets UK, Nov 2025*)
- ◆ Online There is a big generational divide in sustainable food & drink shopping behaviour. Demonstrating their lead in eco-consciousness, **most of Gen Z (55%) makes sustainable choices for most or all of their purchases**. This compares to just 13% among Baby Boomers. The current young consumers are likely to largely maintain their ethical mindsets as they age. Hence, the influence of sustainability-related factors is set to grow significantly in the long term. (Mintel, *Sustainability in Food UK, June 2025*).
- ◆ The national organisation for this industry is the [Association of Convenience Stores](#). Other industry bodies include the [Scottish Grocers' Federation](#), [Scotland Food and Drink](#), the [Fresh Produce Consortium](#) and the [British Retail Consortium](#).

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Where can I find more information on my market?

The Information Service has access to a number of databases which can offer more detail on this industry. Some of these reports are listed below - if you would like to be sent extracts from any of these reports, please contact us on **0300 013 4753** or email info@bgateway.com.

- ◆ **Mintel – *Online Grocery Retailing (March 2026)***. One of the clearest consumer signals is how expectations of convenience are changing. Around 65% of online grocery shoppers say they would accept slower rapid delivery if it meant access to a wider, more useful range. This challenges the idea that speed alone drives value and highlights a growing focus on basket completeness and relevance. This shift marks a clear change in industry dynamics. Online grocery is increasingly mission-led, with shoppers switching between full shops, mid-week top-ups and rapid orders depending on need. Growth now depends on how well retailers support everyday household tasks such as meal planning, restocking and last-minute fixes, rather than simply expanding online access.
- ◆ **Statista – *Factors influencing fruit and vegetables purchases in the UK (2024)*** According to a survey carried out in January and February of 2024 in the UK, freshness and price were the two most important factors when shopping for fruit and vegetables. Some 80 percent of respondents stated that freshness influences their decision when buying such products.
- ◆ **Mintel - Supermarkets – UK – 2025 (November 2025)**. The supermarket channel is estimated to grow by 2.1% in 2025 in value terms. However, adjusted for inflation, volume sales fell and the channel continued to lose share of the wider market. Volume decline is not a trend unique to large-format stores, with 47% of shoppers actively cutting grocery spend, but a growing need for convenience better insulated rival channels, namely discounters and online, from volume decline. The biggest opportunity lies in bold repositioning: using tech and consumer demands for wellness and experiential formats to redefine the role of the physical store. The largest players are uniquely positioned to leverage data, technology and store space to move beyond simply price leadership, to experience-rich, health-centric destinations.

There are also a number of online resources you may find helpful:

- ◆ [Scotland Food & Drink](#) provide information and guidance on a number of different food and drink sectors.
- ◆ [The Grocer](#) is a key industry magazine providing buying and supplying reports and current news.
- ◆ The UK Government published [Food Statistics in your Pocket](#), providing information on the UK food market.
- ◆ The **Waitrose** [Food and Drink Report 2025-2026](#) identifies key trends in the market.

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How can I find out about my competitors?

Business Gateway's online guide to [Competitor Analysis](#) explains how to find your competitors, how to research what they're doing and how to act on what you learn about them.

Immediate competition will be from other businesses in your local area. There are several online directories which can be used to find company information and generate lists easily and at no expense. Many Local Authorities also publish local business directories on the web. Below are some key web resources:

- ◆ General business directories such as [Yell](#) ,[Thomson Local](#) or [Google Maps](#)
- ◆ Trade specialists like [EuroPages](#) (European directory), [The Wholesaler](#) or [Free Index](#)
- ◆ Business to business (B2B) specialists such as [Kompass](#)

Likewise, your local Chamber of Commerce may publish a members' directory; find your local Chamber on the [Scottish Chambers](#) website.

Once you've identified who your competitors are, the next step is to gather information on the way they do business. Which services do they provide? How do they market themselves? How much do they charge?

To learn about your competitors:

- ◆ Look for articles or adverts in local newspapers, trade press and directories.
- ◆ Try to read their marketing material; if the company has an online presence, visit the company's website as a first port of call. Not only does it give you a better understanding of the company's activities, it can also offer a wealth of information such as a company history or staff biographies, as well as the company's partners or suppliers
- ◆ Search for information on limited UK companies via the [Companies House](#) website
- ◆ Gain an insight into your competitor's performance using credit checks and the accounts that limited companies are required to submit to Companies House each year.

We can provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using this resource, or looking for us to help you find relevant publications, please contact us by emailing info@bgateway.com or by calling **0300 013 4753**



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What about suppliers?

[Choosing and Managing Suppliers](#) can help you decide what you need from a supplier, how to identify one and how to choose one to deal with.

Trade associations or industry specific organisations may also be able to recommend suppliers or contacts. You can also use the aforementioned resources for finding competitors to find suppliers.

Once you have decided on a supplier, we can run a credit check on the company to help assess their financial stability. We provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using the resource please info@bgateway.com or by calling **0300 013 4753**.

Who are my customers?

Your business plan should include information about the customers you would expect. Business Gateway's guides on [Market and customer research](#) will help you to identify new trends, opportunities, customers and competitors.

It can be useful to group your customers by geographical location, age or lifestyle. The websites listed below are freely available and can provide most of this information. If you can't find what you're looking for from these websites, please contact us and one of the team will be happy to help:

- ◆ Access the latest population estimates from the [National Records of Scotland \(NRS\)](#). NRS also offers demographic factsheets for each council area in Scotland, which can provide summary statistics for the area you will be based in.
- ◆ Information from the most recent census in 2011 is released via the official website. See in particular the [Census Area Profiles](#). Clicking on your area of interest will give the latest population figures, including estimates by age.
- ◆ [Understanding Scottish Places](#) has interactive profiles of towns and cities across Scotland. It can be useful for understanding the interrelationships and flows between towns, and also gives comparisons between two or more places.
- ◆ [Scottish Government Statistics](#) provide accurate and up-to-date statistics on Scotland, covering population, health, education and housing.
- ◆ [The Scottish Household Survey](#) provides information on the structure, characteristics, attitudes and behaviour of Scottish households, both at a national and local level.
- ◆ [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#) is the recognised national statistical body for the UK. ONS covers a wide range of demographic, economic and social issues at a UK level.



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How can you help me with other aspects of starting my business?

The Business Gateway website has guides, videos, online tutorials and tips on all aspects of starting up a business in Scotland. Follow the links below to explore each resource:

Accountancy

Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland's (ICAS) ["Find a Chartered Accountant"](#) tool

Funding

[Practical information](#) on finance and funding for starting and growing your business

Insurance

[Business insurance guide](#)

Legal Help

Gov.uk ["Licence Finder"](#) tool

Law Society of Scotland's ["Find a Solicitor"](#) tool

Pricing

Business Companion [Pricing & payment guide](#).

Please note: the most effective way to research pricing is to conduct your own research – visit wholesalers or suppliers to obtain price lists, find quotes from similar companies and work out what other businesses in your area are charging

Promotion

[BG guides to Marketing](#)

Training

[Skills Development Scotland's My World of Work](#)

[Funding for training](#)

[Small Business Bonus Scheme \(Scotland\)](#)

Your local Business Gateway can offer events, workshops and 1:2:1 support on all aspects of starting and developing your business. Call the helpline on **0300 013 4753** to find out what is available in your area.

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You must not rely on the information in the report as an alternative to advice from an appropriately qualified professional. If you have any specific questions speak to your Business Gateway Advisor or consult an appropriately qualified professional.

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