

A Focus On **Food Production**

An annual survey of American consumers to understand perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors surrounding food and food-purchasing decisions. 2025 marks the 20th consecutive year that the International Food Information Council (IFIC) has commissioned the *IFIC Food & Health Survey*.



METHODOLOGY



FOOD & HEALTH
SURVEY

2025

IFIC FOOD & HEALTH SURVEY METHODOLOGY

- An online survey of 3,000 Americans ages 18 to 80 years.
- The survey was fielded from March 13-27, 2025.
- On average, the survey took ~20 minutes to complete.
- The survey was conducted via Dynata's consumer panel.

SUGGESTED CITATION:

International Food Information Council. 2025 IFIC Food & Health Survey: A Focus On Food Production. November 2025. <https://ific.org/research/2025-food-health-survey>

- The results were weighted to ensure that they are reflective of the American population ages 18 to 80 years, as seen in the [2024 Current Population Survey](#). Specifically, results were weighted by age, education, gender, race/ethnicity, and region.
- IFIC commissions Greenwald Research to conduct its annual *Food & Health Survey*.



This year's *Food & Health Survey* marks the 20th consecutive year that the International Food Information Council (IFIC) has surveyed American consumers to understand perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors surrounding food and food-purchasing decisions. In addition to exploring new perspectives, the 2025 *IFIC Food & Health Survey* takes a retrospective look at how perceptions have evolved over the last two decades.

Key findings from this year's online survey of **3,000 Americans** focus on:

- Food and beverage purchase-drivers
- Criteria used to define “healthy” food
- Familiarity with U.S. Dietary Guidelines and MyPlate
- Stress and mental and emotional well-being
- Trust in food information sources, including exposure and impact of social media
- Views on food colors and food safety, including the safety of imported foods and those produced in the U.S.
- Body weight, weight-loss medications, and perceptions of calorie sources that contribute to weight gain
- Current eating patterns, personal diet grades, and reflections on how they have changed from 20 years ago
- Beliefs about food production and food technologies, including impressions of GMOs and sustainability
- Approaches to sugar consumption and opinions of low- and no-calorie sweeteners
- “Ultraprocessed foods,” including familiarity with the term and criteria used to identify them.

Findings are presented for all survey respondents. Additional insights are provided based on how findings vary by different types of demographic groups, such as by age, race, gender, and household income.

Note: Significant changes in trend vs. 2024 (and/or in some cases, prior years) are indicated using up-and-down arrows and/or call-out boxes.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Focus On Food Production



**FOOD & HEALTH
SURVEY**

2025

KEY FINDINGS ON FOOD PRODUCTION

Six in ten Americans say it is important to know where their food comes from.

From 2017 through 2025, the *IFIC Food & Health Survey* has tracked how Americans prioritize factors related to food production when purchasing food and beverages. In 2025, two items reappeared after limited prior fielding: “knowing the manufacturer shares my values” (only asked in 2017) and “knowing where the food comes from” (asked 2017-2020).

In 2025, “knowing where the food comes from” was the top factor, selected by 59% of respondents, up from 51% in 2017. At least half of Americans also say it is important that food is consistently available locally (54%) and that they know whether it is bioengineered (50%).

Several shifts emerged compared with prior years. The share saying it is very important that food is consistently available locally declined to 21% (down from 24% in 2024). The importance of “knowing the manufacturer shares my values” increased to 36% (up from 32% in 2017), driven by a rise in those rating it very important (13% to 16%). Meanwhile, fewer Americans reported that animal welfare (47%, down from 51% in 2024) and the use of farming technologies that reduce environmental impact (41%, down from 44% in 2024) is important to them. The largest decline over time is whether the food has recyclable packaging, which dropped 7 points from 2022 to 2025 (42% to 34%).

Six in ten Americans say it is important for them to purchase or consume environmentally sustainable foods, an increase from 2021.

From 2016 to 2021, the *IFIC Food & Health Survey* asked Americans how important it was that the food they purchase is produced in a sustainable (2016-2017) or environmentally sustainable (2018-2021) way. The 2025 survey revisited this question.

In 2025, 59% of Americans said it is very (22%) or somewhat important (37%) that their food is produced in an environmentally sustainable way, up from 53% in 2021. When the question was first asked in 2016, 73% considered sustainability important, yet the figure has not exceeded 59% since. While the share who say sustainability is somewhat important has fluctuated from year-to-year (33% in 2016-2017, 38% in 2018, 33% in 2019, 37% in 2020, 31% in 2021, and 37% in 2025), those calling it very important has remained remarkably stable (21% in 2018, and 22% in 2019-2021 and 2025).

Neutral responses (those reporting it is neither important nor unimportant) have gradually declined in recent years (27% in 2019, 23% in 2020, 24% in 2021, and 22% in 2025). The share who say they do not know enough to form an opinion fell from 8% in 2021 to 4% in 2025.

Overall, Americans continue to say they consider environmentally sustainable food production an important factor in their food decisions, while the proportion of neutral or less knowledgeable respondents has decreased in recent years.

KEY FINDINGS ON FOOD PRODUCTION

Americans define a sustainable diet by considering environmental impact, nutrition, responsible production, minimizing food waste, and ensuring affordability and availability of food.

In the 2025 IFIC Food & Health Survey, Americans were asked, for the first time since 2015, how they define a sustainable diet. Top criteria included environmental impact, nutrition, responsible production, minimizing food waste, and ensuring affordability and availability of food.

Since 2015, notable shifts in perceptions have occurred. The largest increases emphasize environmental considerations: a sustainable diet means foods have a smaller carbon footprint (+11%), create less food waste (+9%), a smaller impact on the environment (+6%), and are produced using fewer natural resources (+5%).

Conversely, fewer Americans now define a sustainable diet as foods that represent a balanced, nutritious meal (-12%) and/or foods that are affordable and readily available (-4%).

These results indicate that over the past decade, Americans' interpretation of a sustainable diet has shifted toward environmental and resource-focused considerations, while the emphasis on nutrition, cost, and accessibility has declined. Overall, the findings highlight a growing awareness of the environmental aspects of food choices as a central component of sustainable diets.

Americans most frequently look for “natural” and “no hormones or steroids” label claims when shopping for foods and beverages.

In 2025, Americans reported which food production-related label claims they most frequently look for when shopping for foods and beverages. Among the fourteen options provided, “natural” (41%) and “no hormones or steroids” (38%) were cited most often. “Locally grown” (33%), “raised without antibiotics” (32%), and “organic” and “non-GMO” (both 30%), followed the top two.

Label claims highlighting packaging and other attributes were less commonly consulted. About one in five Americans look for “recyclable packaging” (21%) or “sustainably sourced” products (21%), while smaller shares check for “packaging made from recycled materials” (17%), “plant-based” (14%), “reusable packaging” (13%), “compostable packaging” (10%), “bioengineered/containing bioengineered ingredients” (10%), or “certified by a third-party environmental organization” (10%). Nineteen percent of respondents do not consult any of the label options provided.

KEY FINDINGS ON FOOD PRODUCTION

Two in ten Americans view the use of biotechnology in food production favorably, while nearly four in ten view it unfavorably.

The 2025 IFIC Food & Health Survey assessed Americans' views on the use of biotechnology ("GMO") in food production for the first time since 2016.

This year, two in ten Americans (20%) report a favorable impression of using biotechnology in food production (7% very favorable, 13% somewhat favorable). Nearly four in ten (37%) view it unfavorably (20% are not very favorable, 18% are not at all favorable).

Public opinion has shifted more negative since 2016. The share of Americans with unfavorable views increased from 27% in 2016 (14% not very favorable, 13% not at all favorable) to 37% in 2025, driven by gains among those who are not very favorable (+6%) and not at all favorable (+4%) about the use of biotechnology in food production.

At the same time, moderately positive perceptions have declined. The share of Americans with a somewhat favorable view dropped from 16% in 2016 to 13% in 2025. Additionally, fewer Americans report they do not know enough to form an opinion about the use of biotechnology in food production, falling from 25% in 2016 to 15% this year.

More than half of Americans say they are concerned about the amount of food their household wastes.

The 2025 IFIC Food & Health Survey again measured Americans' concern about the amount of food waste their household produces, last assessed in 2022. This question provides insight into consumer awareness of an issue linked to both environmental sustainability and household food budgets.

In 2025, 54% of Americans say they are concerned about their household's food waste, 44% are not concerned, and 2% are unsure. These results align with findings from 2022, reflecting stable attitudes over the past three years.

Concern levels by intensity also show minimal change. This year, 21% are very concerned and 33% somewhat concerned, compared with 24% and 33% in 2022, respectively. Meanwhile, 27% are not too concerned and 17% are not at all concerned, similar to 25% and 16% in 2022, respectively. This consistency suggests that while many households recognize food waste as an issue, the level of concern has not grown.

Overall, Americans continue to say they are concerned about the amount of food they waste, though there is still opportunity to engage those who report little to no concern. Tracking these attitudes over time can inform efforts to encourage waste-reducing behaviors and support more sustainable food practices at home.

KEY FINDINGS ON FOOD PRODUCTION

Fewer Americans say environmental sustainability impacts their food and beverage purchases compared to taste, price, healthfulness, or convenience.

For two decades, the *IFIC Food & Health Survey* has consistently shown that taste dominates food and beverage purchase decisions. In 2006, 85% of Americans reported being driven by taste, far ahead of price (64%), healthfulness (58%), and convenience (48%). This hierarchy has remained the same every year for two decades: taste leads, followed by price, healthfulness, and convenience.

Sustainability was added in 2011, with 52% of respondents considering it impactful. By 2018, its influence had declined to 39%. In 2019, the measure was modified to environmental sustainability, and only 27% reported it as impactful—the same as in 2025.

In 2025, Americans report a notable drop in the impact of all factors except taste compared with 2024: price fell from 76% to 71%, healthfulness from 62% to 57%, convenience from 57% to 52%, and environmental sustainability from 31% to 27%.

These long-term trends highlight that while taste remains the dominant driver, the influence of some factors has evolved over time. Compared with 2006, the impact of price on food and beverage purchases has changed the most (+7%), followed by convenience (+4%), taste (-1%), and healthfulness (-1%). Compared to 2019, the impact of environmental sustainability is unchanged, yet its influence has declined the most of any factor since 2011 (-26%).

Fewer Americans across all income levels say environmental sustainability impacts their food and beverage purchases compared to taste, price, healthfulness, or convenience.

In the 2024 and 2025 *IFIC Food & Health Survey*, the impact of five purchasing factors (taste, price, healthfulness, convenience, and environmental sustainability) was analyzed by household income. Among households earning under \$100,000, the hierarchy of these purchase factors generally aligns with historical *IFIC Food & Health Survey* trends: taste leads, followed by price, healthfulness, convenience, and environmental sustainability. The only deviation, also observed in 2024, occurs among Americans in households earning under \$35,000, who report convenience as a stronger influence than healthfulness on their food and beverage purchases.

In contrast, among households earning \$100,000 or more, the pattern shifts: healthfulness surpasses price as a purchase driver, mirroring last year's finding.

The most pronounced gaps between the highest and lowest income households are seen for the impact of healthfulness (+18%) and taste (+12%) on food and beverage purchase decisions, both exerting greater influence among the highest earning households. Conversely, price (-14%), convenience (-3%), and environmental sustainability (-2%) have less sway among those in the highest income households.

KEY FINDINGS ON FOOD PRODUCTION

More than 6 in 10 Americans have noticed a major increase in the cost of food and beverages in the last year.

Since 2022, the *IFIC Food & Health Survey* has tracked whether Americans notice changes in the cost of food and beverages.

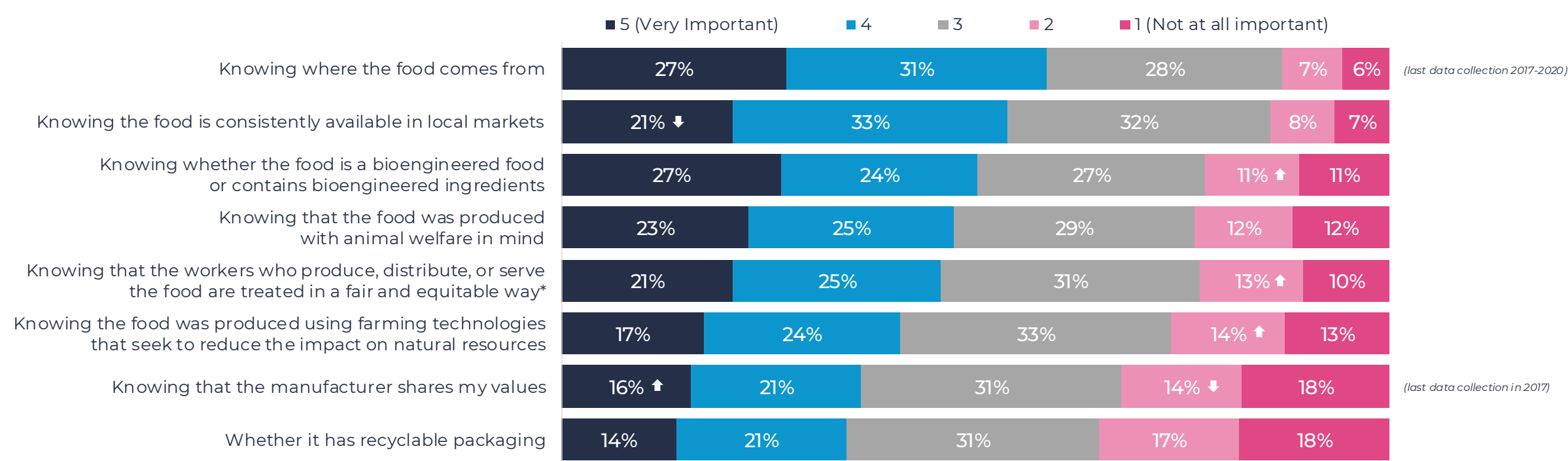
In the past year, 86% of Americans reported noticing an increase in food and beverage costs, with 62% describing the increase as major and 25% as minor. Eight percent reported perceiving no change, while 3% noted a minor decrease and 2% a major decrease.

The share of respondents noticing an increase (86%) is lower than the 90% observed in both 2023 and 2024 yet remains higher than the 83% reported in 2022. These findings indicate that U.S. consumers are aware of changing food and beverage prices, with most households continuing to perceive rising prices, although the intensity of perceived increases has softened compared with the previous two years.

Six in ten Americans say it is important to know where their food comes from, up 8 points from 2017.

Knowing where their food comes from is followed by local availability (54%) and bioengineering (50%) as purchase factors. The importance of buying food produced with animal welfare in mind (-3%) and farming technologies that preserve natural resources (-3%) have declined since last year. Knowing the food's origin (+8%) and sharing values with the manufacturer (+5%) have grown in importance since 2017. The emphasis on recyclable packaging (-7%) has decreased the most since 2022.

Food Production-Related Purchase Decision Factors

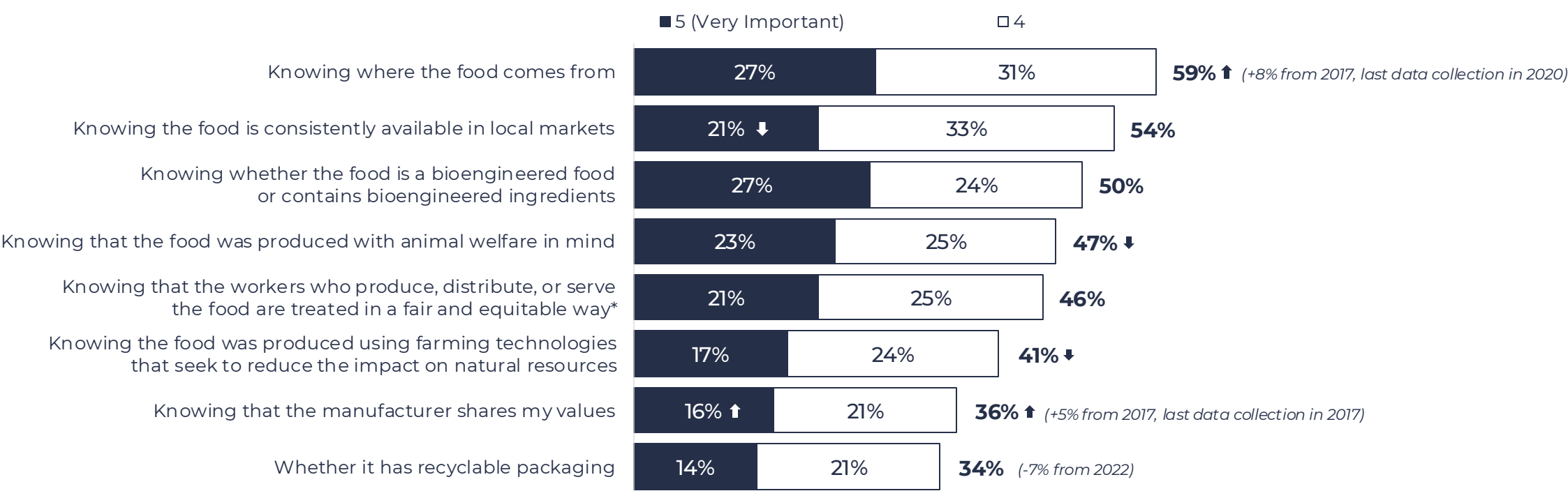


[TREND 2017-2025] T1 How important are the following factors in your decision to purchase a food or beverage? (n=3000)
Note: Anchored 5-pt Likert scale employed (1=Not at all important, 5=Very important). No description was provided for 2, 3, and 4 on the Likert scale.
Note: Arrows in the bar chart indicate statistical significance vs. the previous year of data collection. Parentheses show the previous year of data collection for two items; all others were last collected in 2024.
Note: Totals may not add up or equal 100% due to rounding.
*Text is abridged

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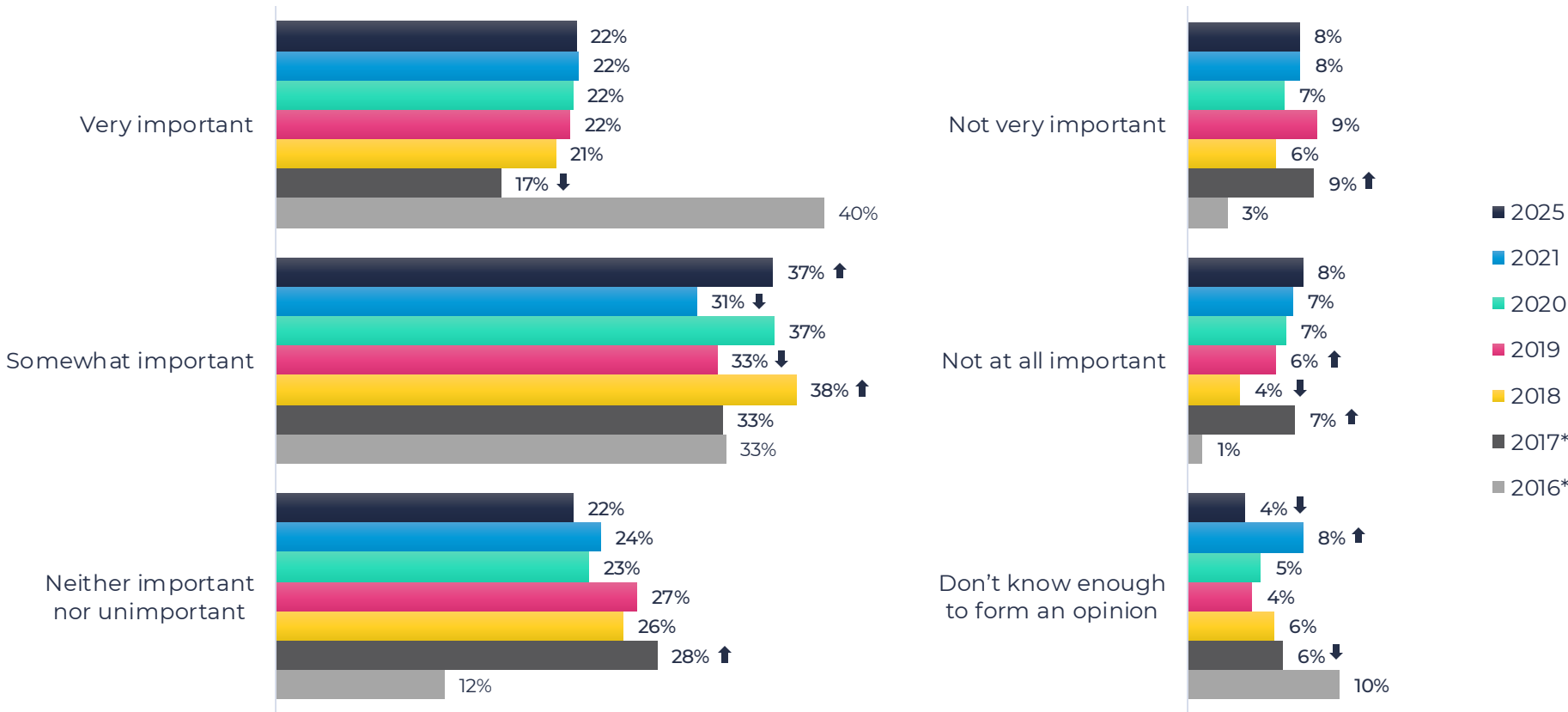


[TREND 2017-2025] T1 How important are the following factors in your decision to purchase a food or beverage? (n=3000)
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Note: Arrows in the bar chart indicate statistical significance vs. previous year of data collection. Parentheses indicate statistical significance vs. the first year of (non-split sample) data collection for that item.
Note: Totals may not add up due to rounding.
*Text is abridged

Six in ten Americans say it is important for them to purchase or consume environmentally sustainable foods, an increase from 2021.

Despite annual fluctuations, the importance of buying and consuming environmentally sustainable foods in 2025 aligns with levels seen in 2018 and 2020.

Importance of Purchasing Environmentally Sustainable Food



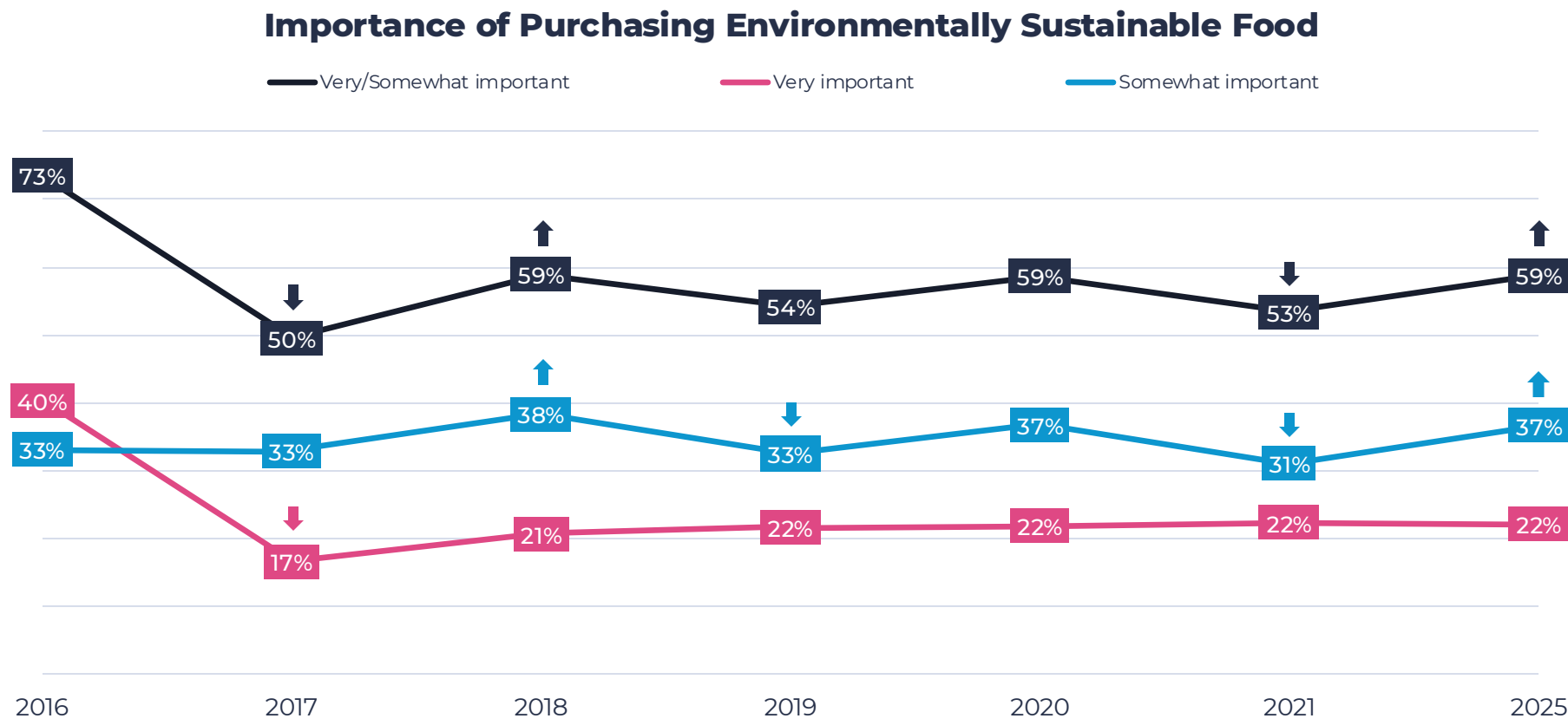
59% ↑

Say it is important that they purchase or consume foods that are produced in an environmentally sustainable way

53% in 2021 ↓
59% in 2020
54% in 2019
59% in 2018 ↑
50% in 2017* ↓
73% in 2016*

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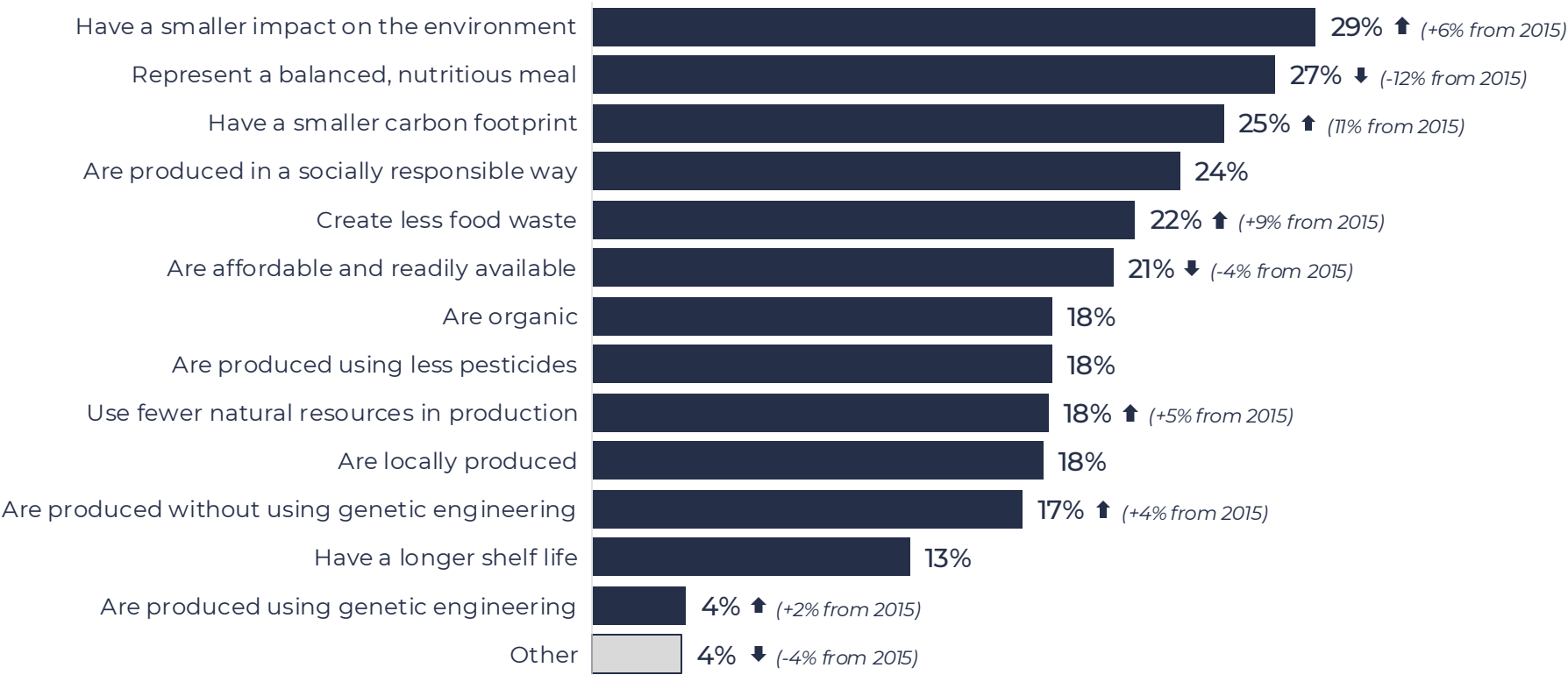
59% ↑
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53% in 2021 ↓
59% in 2020
54% in 2019
59% in 2018 ↑
50% in 2017* ↓
73% in 2016*

Americans define a sustainable diet by considering environmental impact, nutrition, responsible production, minimizing food waste, and ensuring affordability and availability of food.

Compared to 2015, more Americans say a sustainable diet means foods have a smaller carbon footprint (+11%), create less food waste (+9%), and a smaller impact on the environment (+6%), while fewer say it represents a balanced, nutritious meal (-12%).

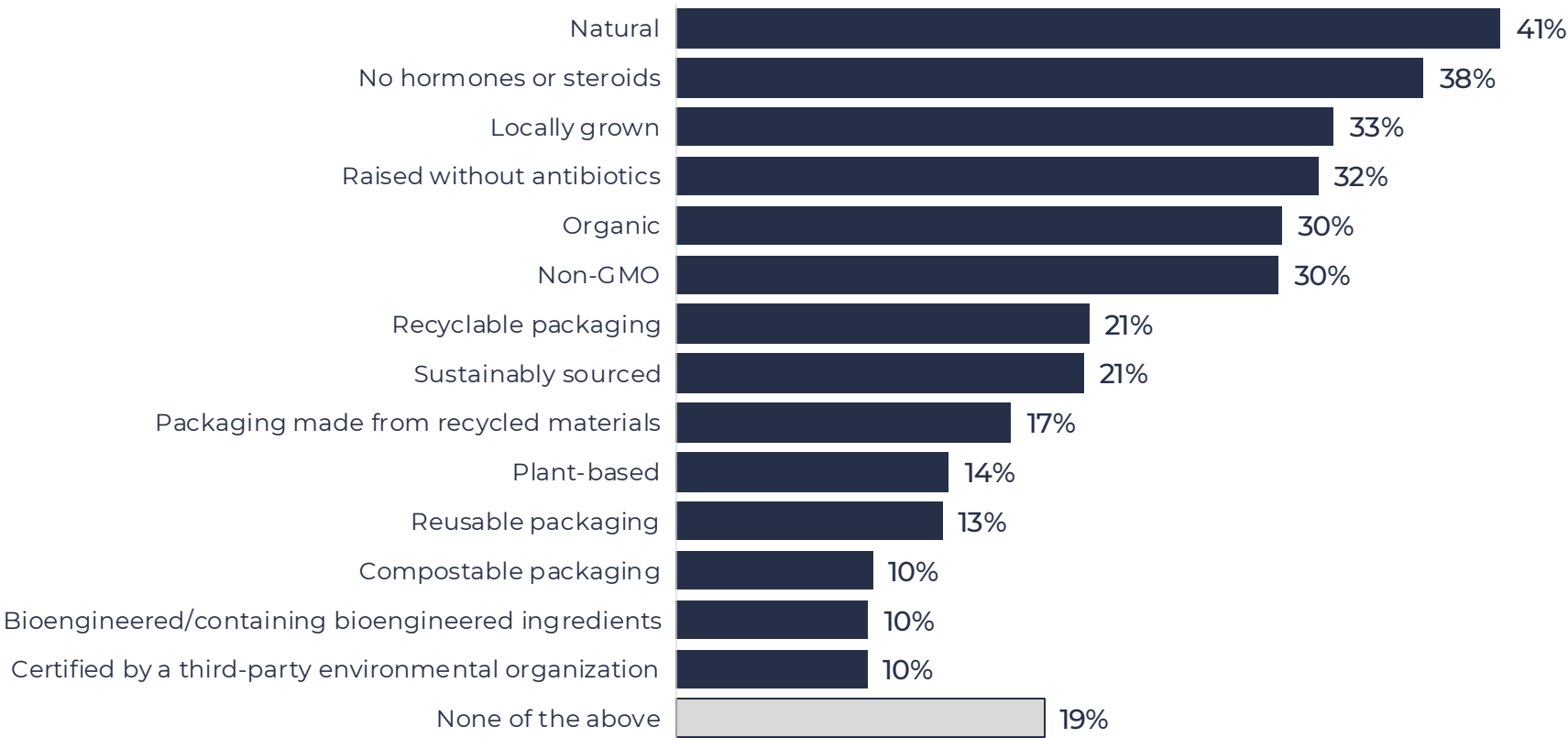
Perceived Characteristics of Foods in a Sustainable Diet



Americans most frequently look for “natural” and “no hormones or steroids” label claims when shopping for foods and beverages.

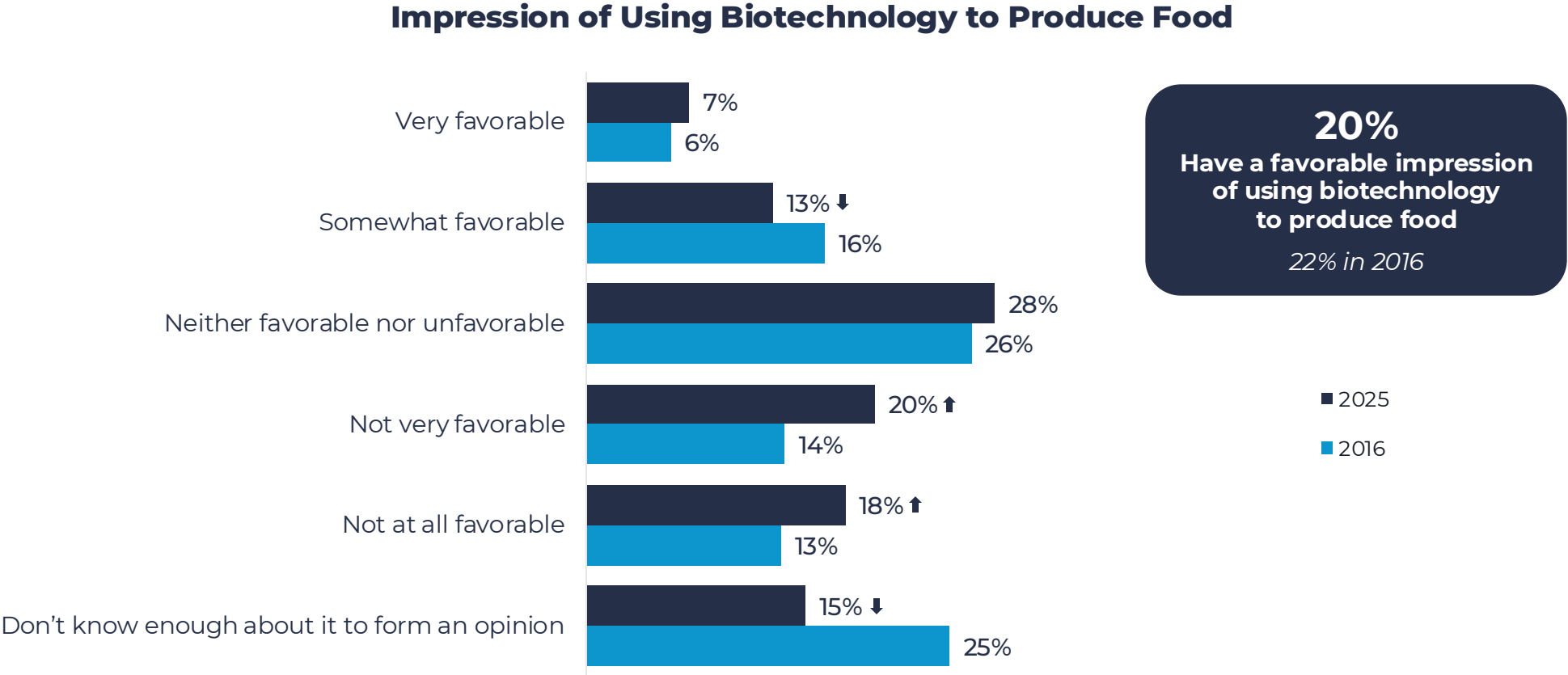
About four in ten Americans report looking for “natural” (41%) and “no hormones or steroids” (38%) label claims, while around three in ten look for “locally grown” (33%), “raised without antibiotics” (32%), “organic” (30%), and/or “non-GMO” (30%) labels.

Label Claims Consumer Look for When Shopping for Foods & Beverages



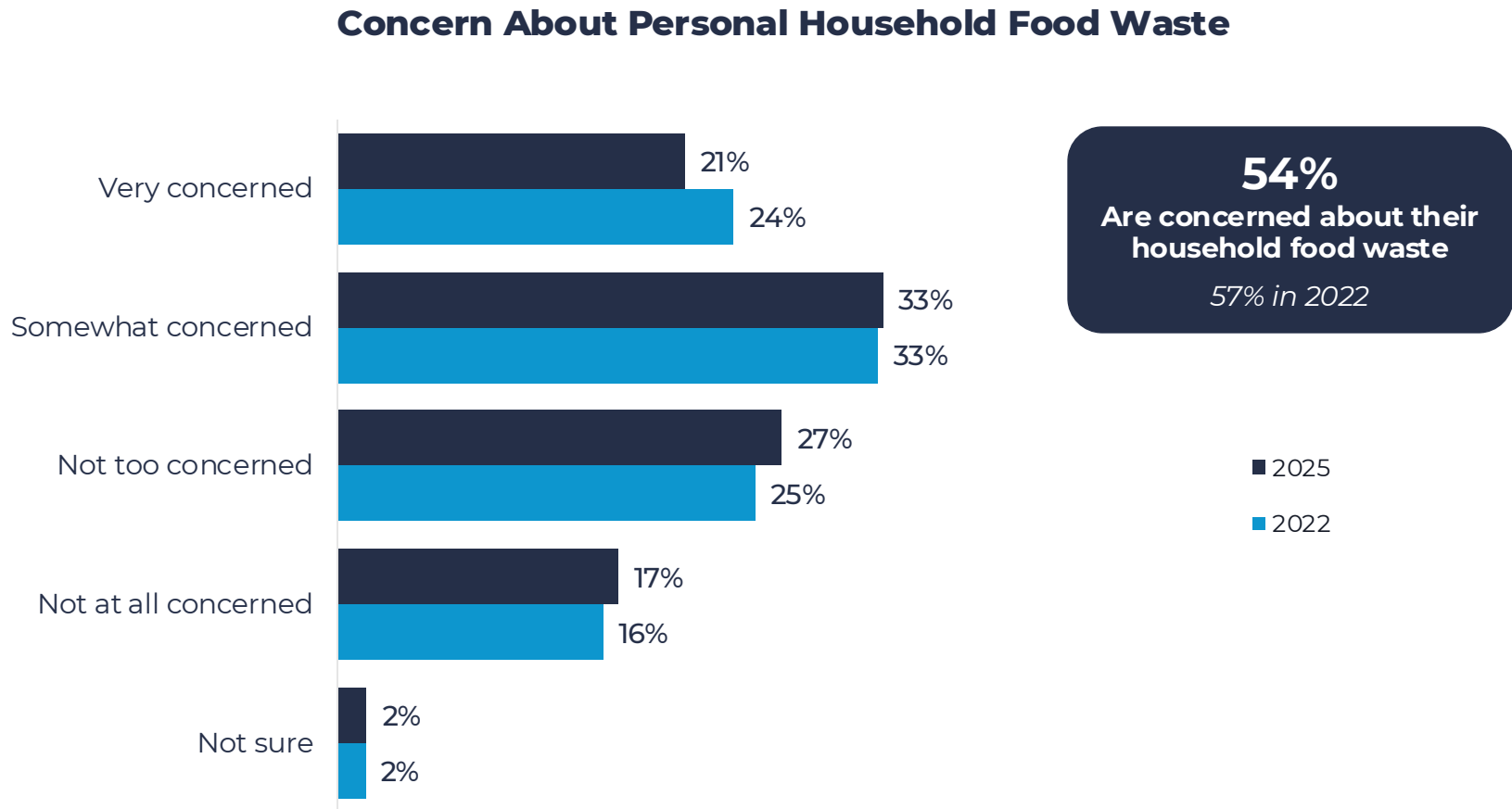
Two in ten Americans view the use of biotechnology in food production favorably, while nearly four in ten view it unfavorably.

Compared to 2016, public sentiment toward biotechnology in food production is less favorable. Unfavorable views rose from 27% in 2016 to 37% in 2025, driven by increases in those who see it not at all (+4%) or not very (+6%) favorably. Somewhat favorable views fell from 16% to 13%, and the share who don't know enough to form an opinion dropped from 25% to 15%.



More than half of Americans say they are concerned about the amount of food their household wastes.

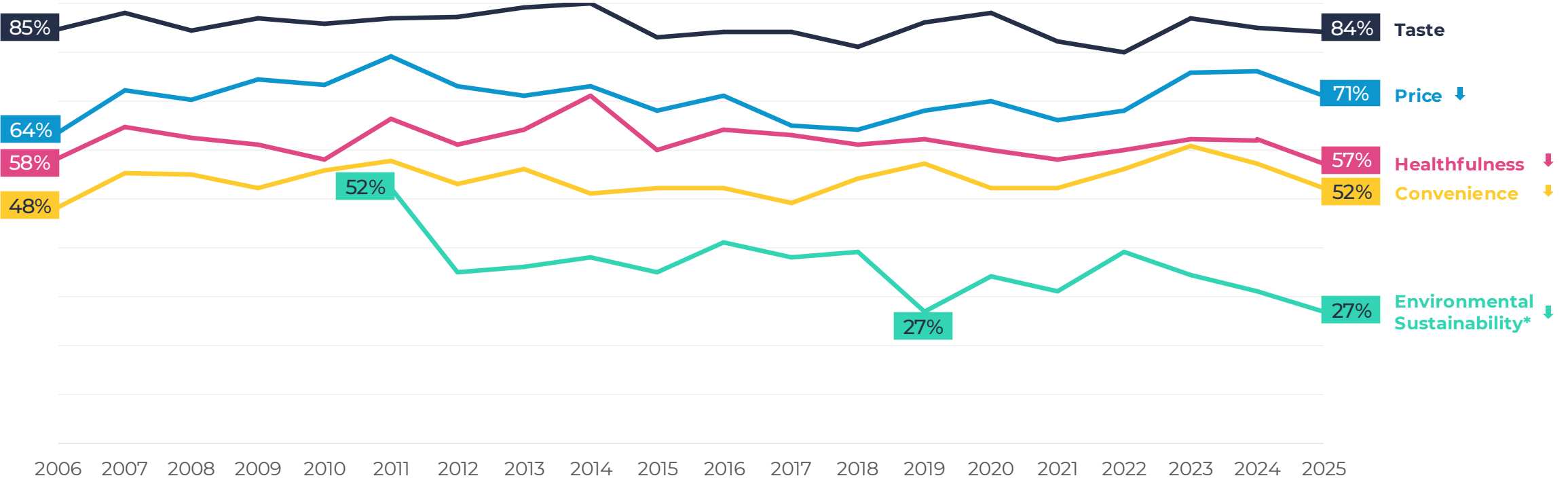
Americans' concerns about the amount of food their household wastes have held steady from 2022 to 2025.



Fewer Americans say environmental sustainability impacts their food and beverage purchases compared to taste, price, healthfulness, or convenience.

For 20 consecutive years, Americans have considered taste a stronger driver of food and beverage purchases than price, healthfulness, or convenience. Since 2011, sustainability (2011-2018) and environmental sustainability (2019-2025) is less impactful.

Food & Beverage Purchase Drivers Since 2006
(% 4-5 Impact out of 5)

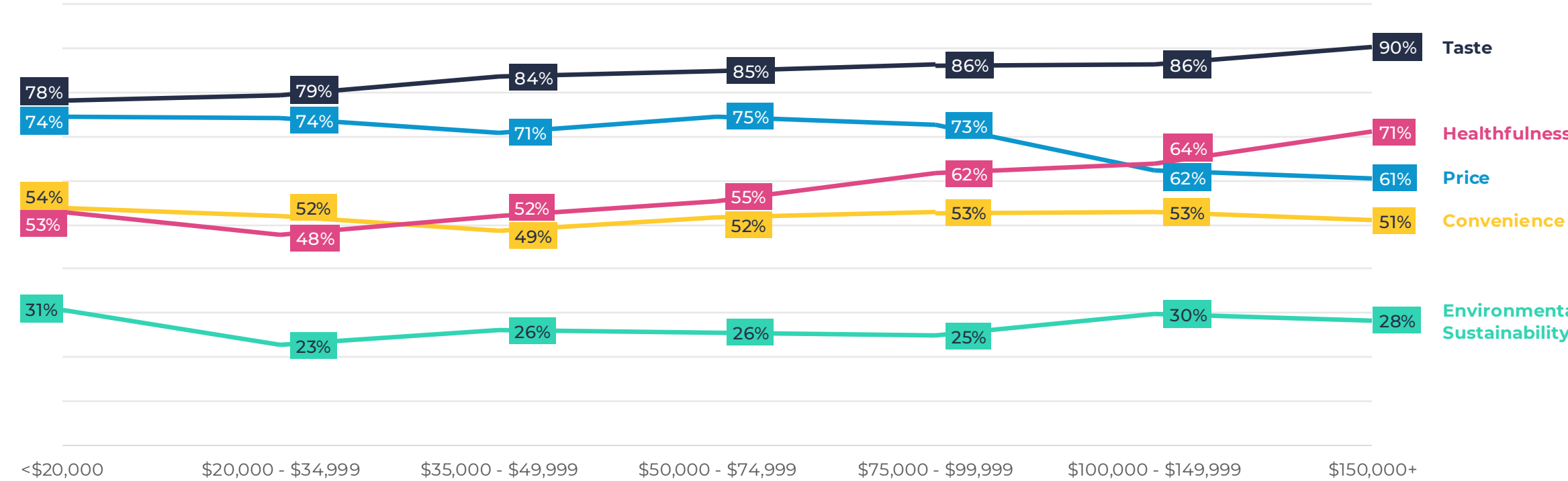


[TREND 2006-2025] G12 How much of an impact do the following have on your decision to buy foods and beverages? (n=3,000)
Note: Anchored 5-pt Likert scale employed (1=No impact, 5=A great impact). No description was provided for 2, 3, and 4 on the Likert scale.
Note: Arrows indicate statistical significance vs. 2024.
*In 2019, "Sustainability" was changed to "Environmental Sustainability"

Fewer Americans across all income levels say environmental sustainability impacts their food and beverage purchases compared to taste, price, healthfulness, or convenience.

Convenience and environmental sustainability show the most consistent influence on food and beverage purchases across household income levels, with the smallest gap between the highest- and lowest-income households.

Food & Beverage Purchase Drivers by Annual Household Income
(% 4-5 Impact out of 5)

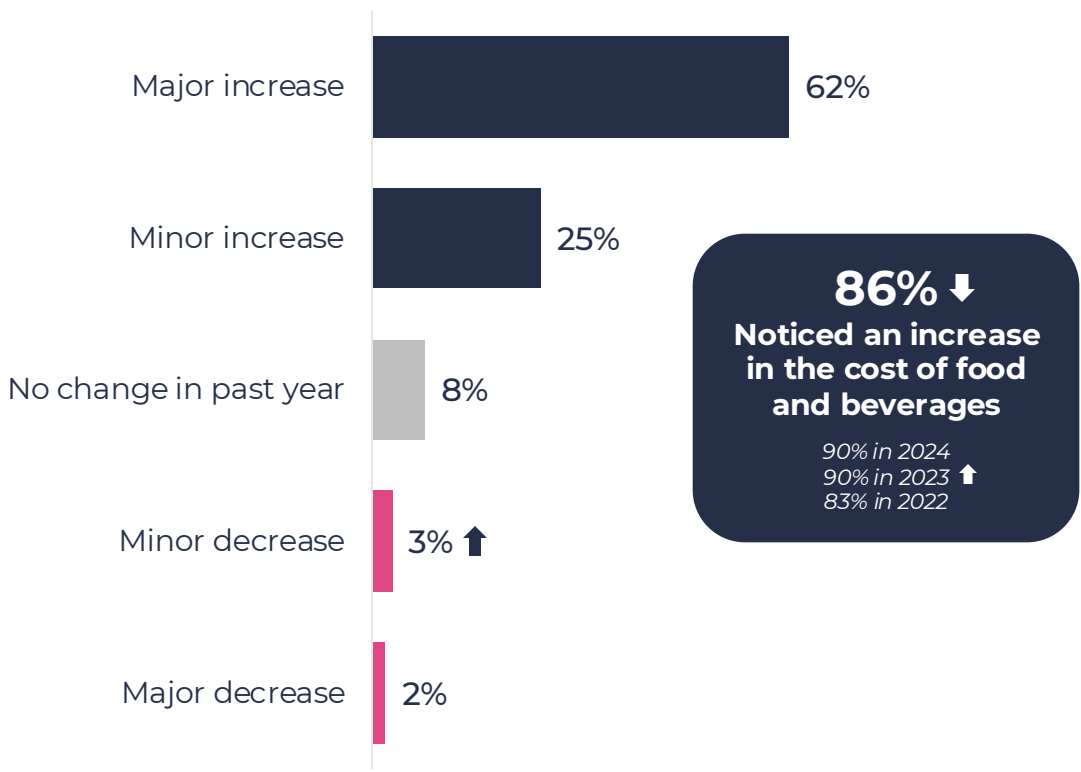


[TREND 2024-2025] G12 How much of an impact do the following have on your decision to buy foods and beverages? (n=3,000)
Note: Anchored 5-pt Likert scale employed (1=No impact, 5=A great impact). No description was provided for 2, 3, and 4 on the Likert scale.
*In 2019, "Sustainability" was changed to "Environmental Sustainability"

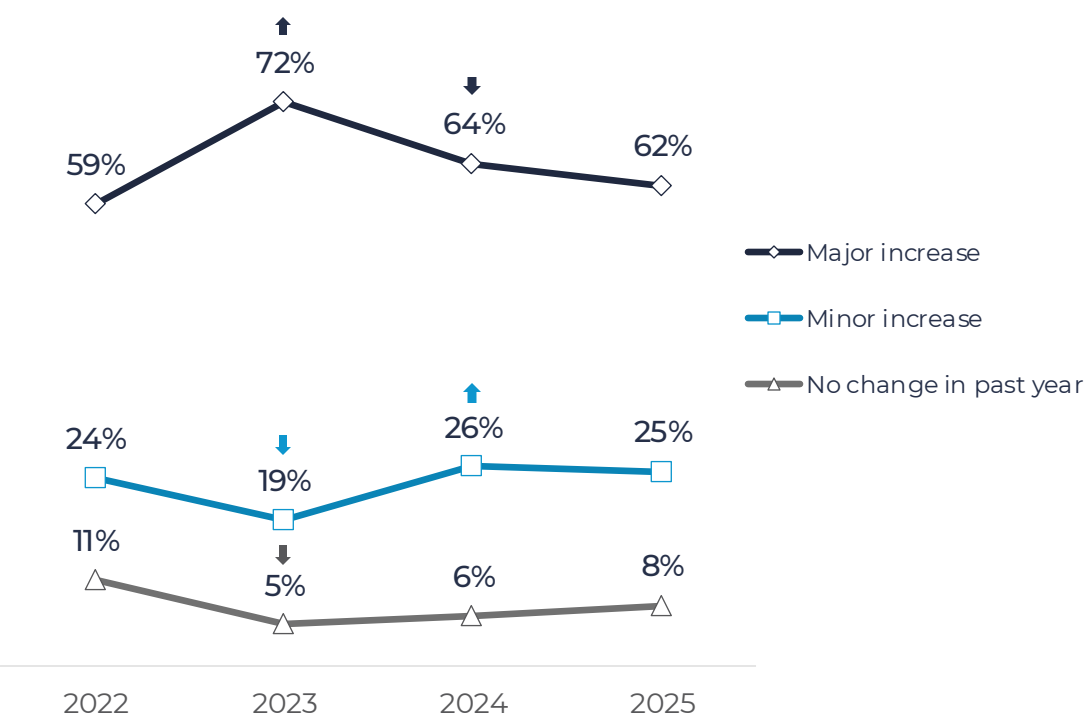
More than 6 in 10 Americans have noticed a major increase in the cost of food and beverages in the last year.

Fewer Americans reported noticing higher food and beverage costs in 2025 (86%) than in the previous two years (90% in 2023 and 2024), yet more reported noticing higher costs in 2025 compared to 2022 (86% vs. 83%).

Perceived Change in the Cost of Food & Beverages



Four-Year Trend in Perceived Cost Change



[TREND 2022-2025] G19 In the past year, have you noticed a change in the overall cost of food and beverages? (n=3000)
Note: Arrow in the bar chart indicates statistical significance vs. 2024. Arrows in the callout box and line chart indicate statistical significance vs. previous year.
Note: Totals may not add up or equal 100% due to rounding.

DEMOGRAPHICS

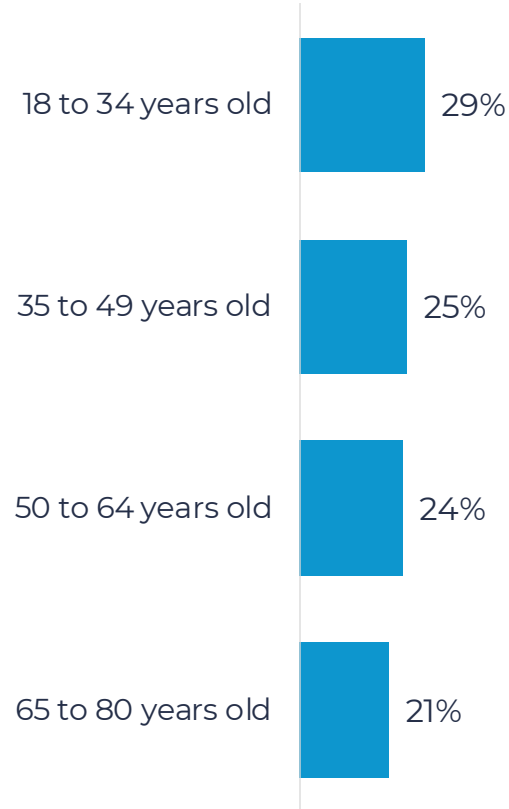


FOOD & HEALTH
SURVEY

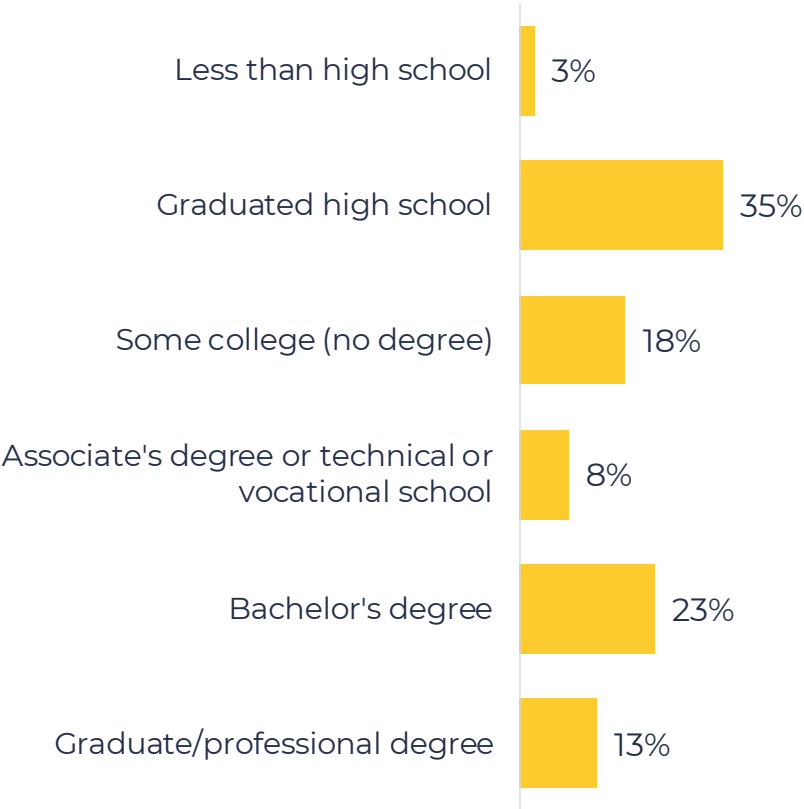
2025

Demographics

AGE

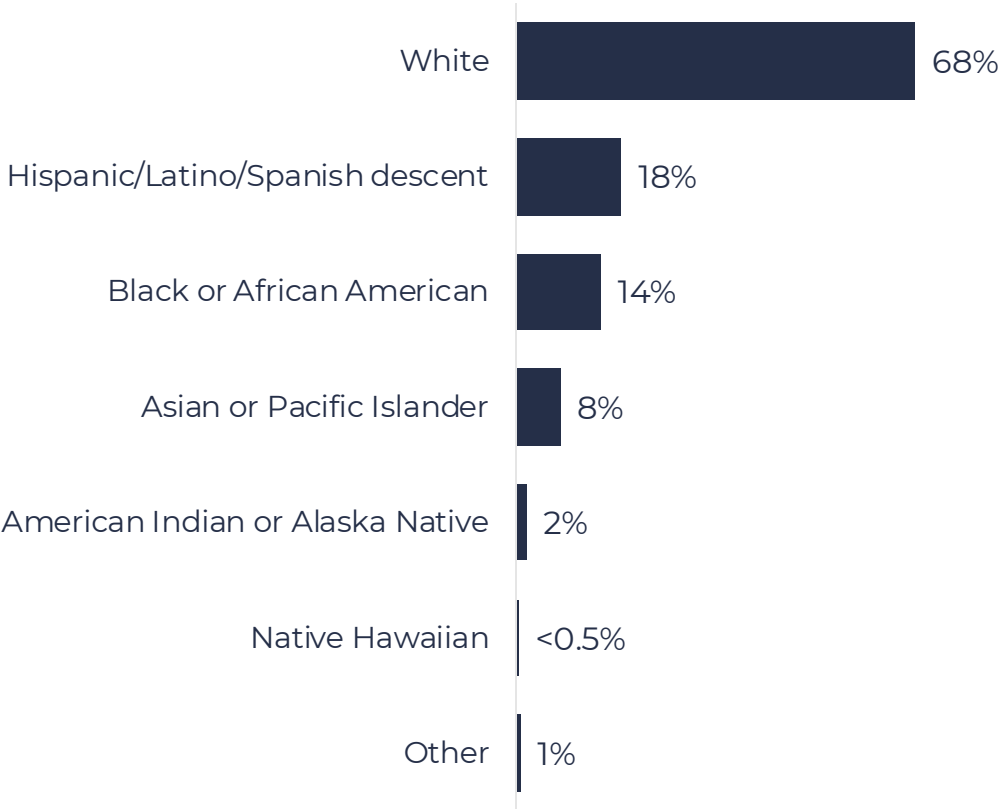


EDUCATION

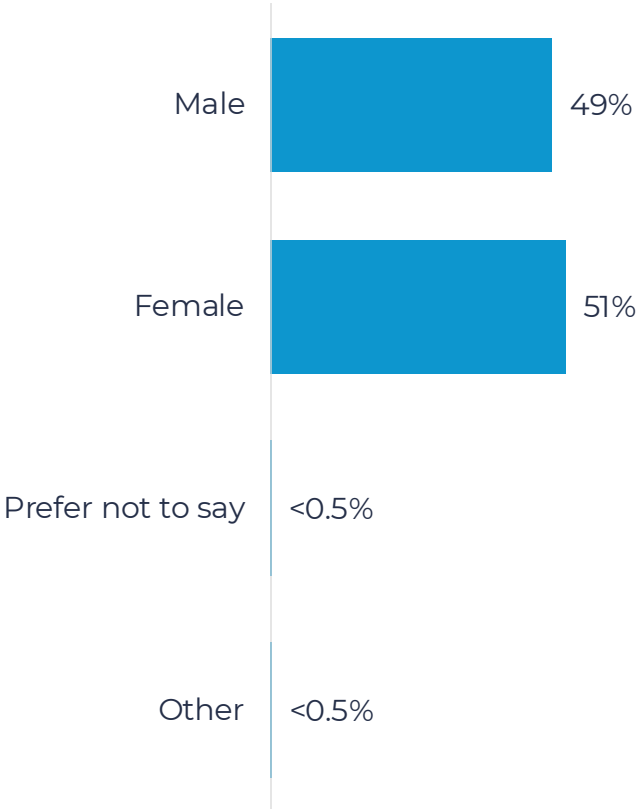


Demographics

RACE/ETHNICITY

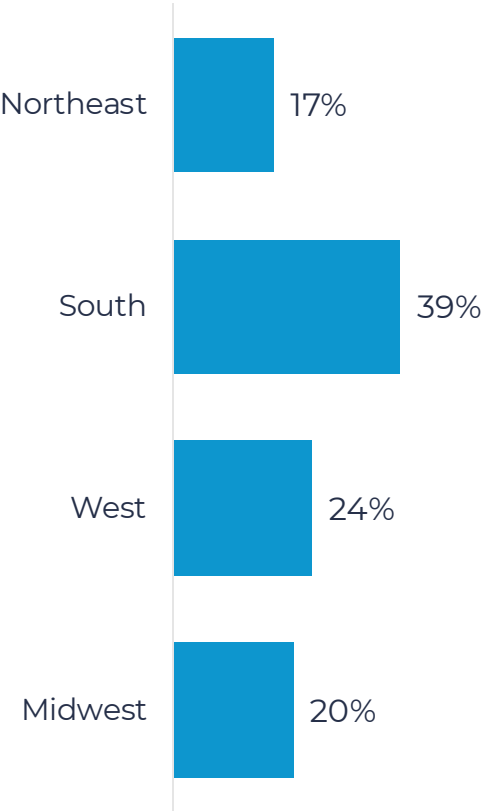


GENDER

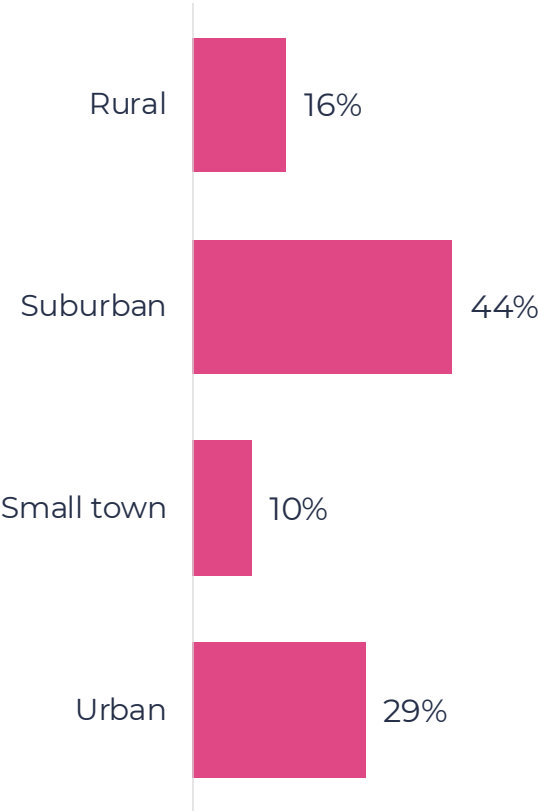


Demographics

REGION

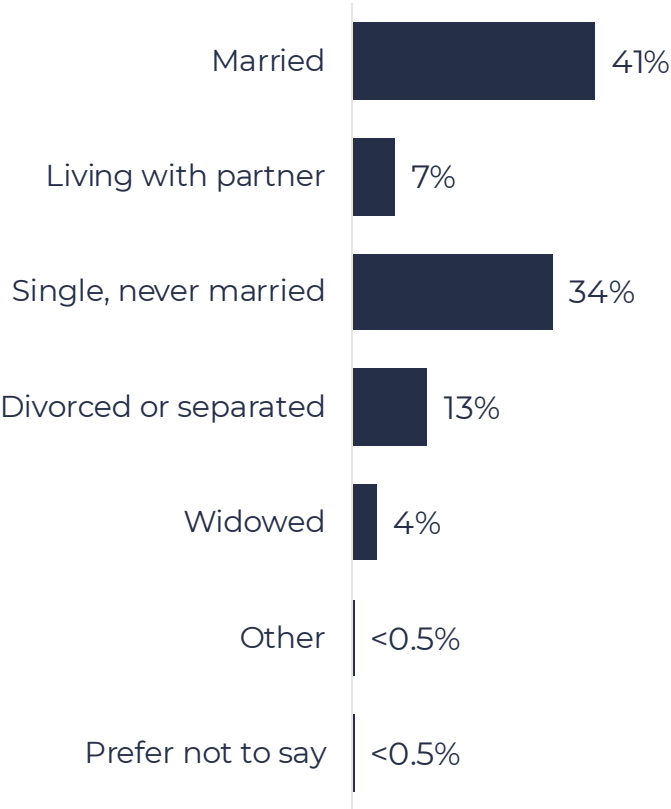


COMMUNITY

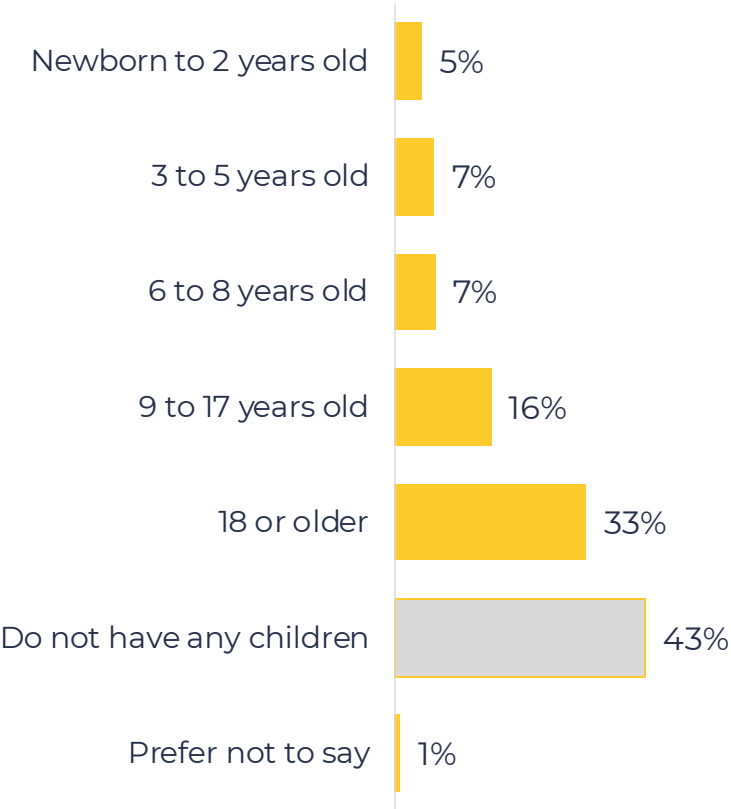


Demographics

MARITAL STATUS

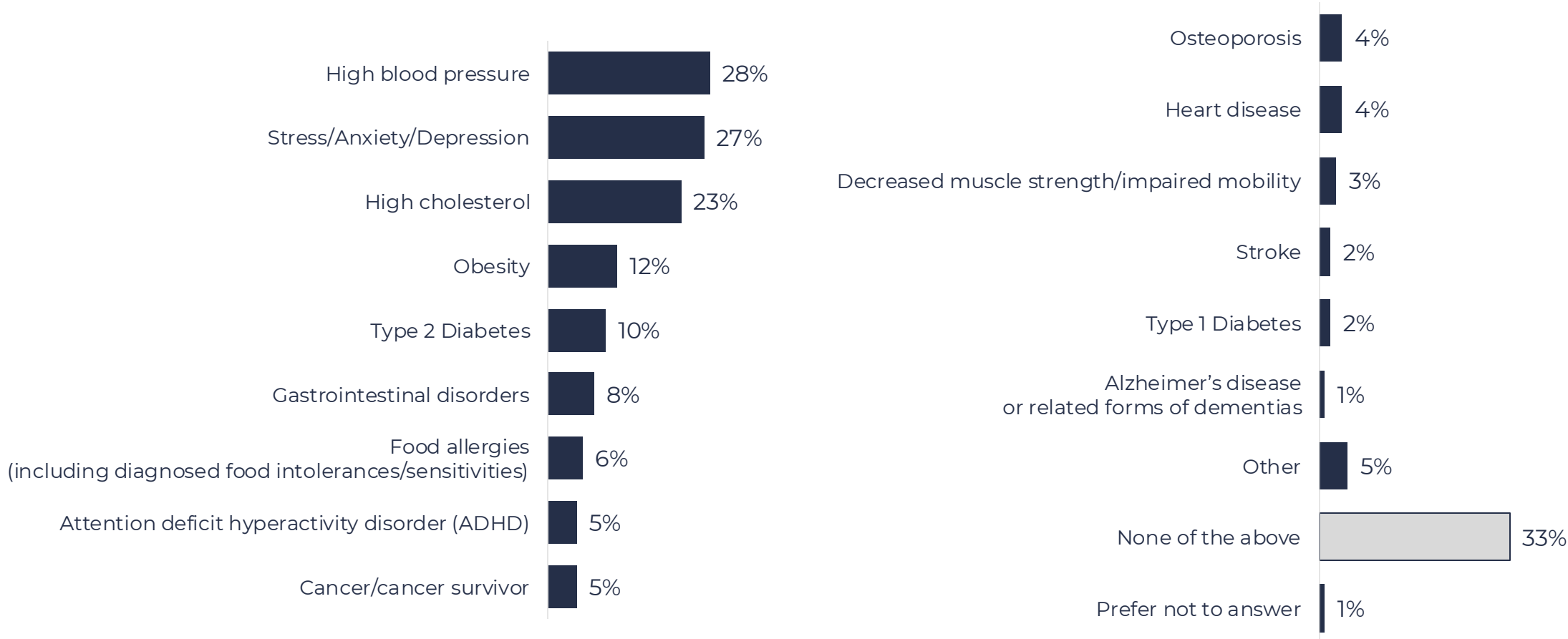


CHILDREN



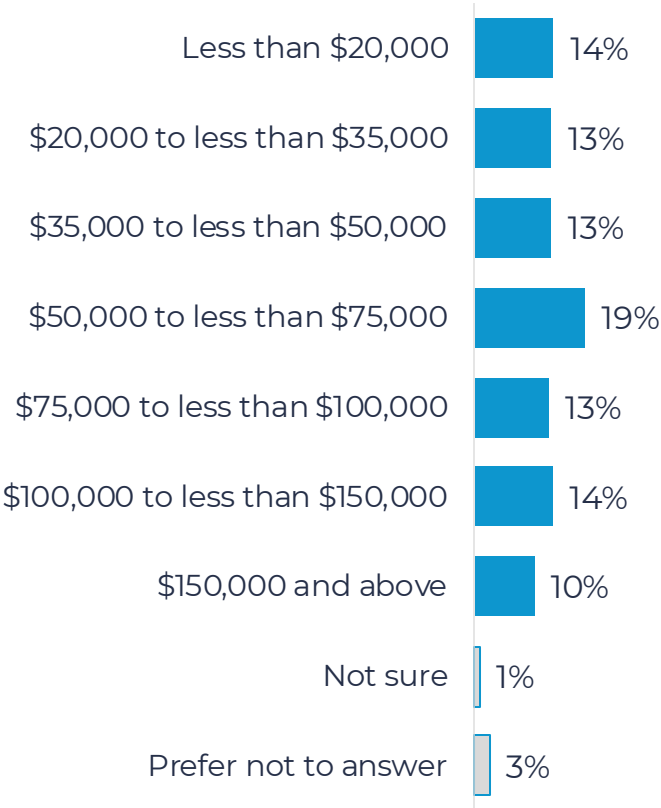
Demographics

MEDICAL CONDITIONS

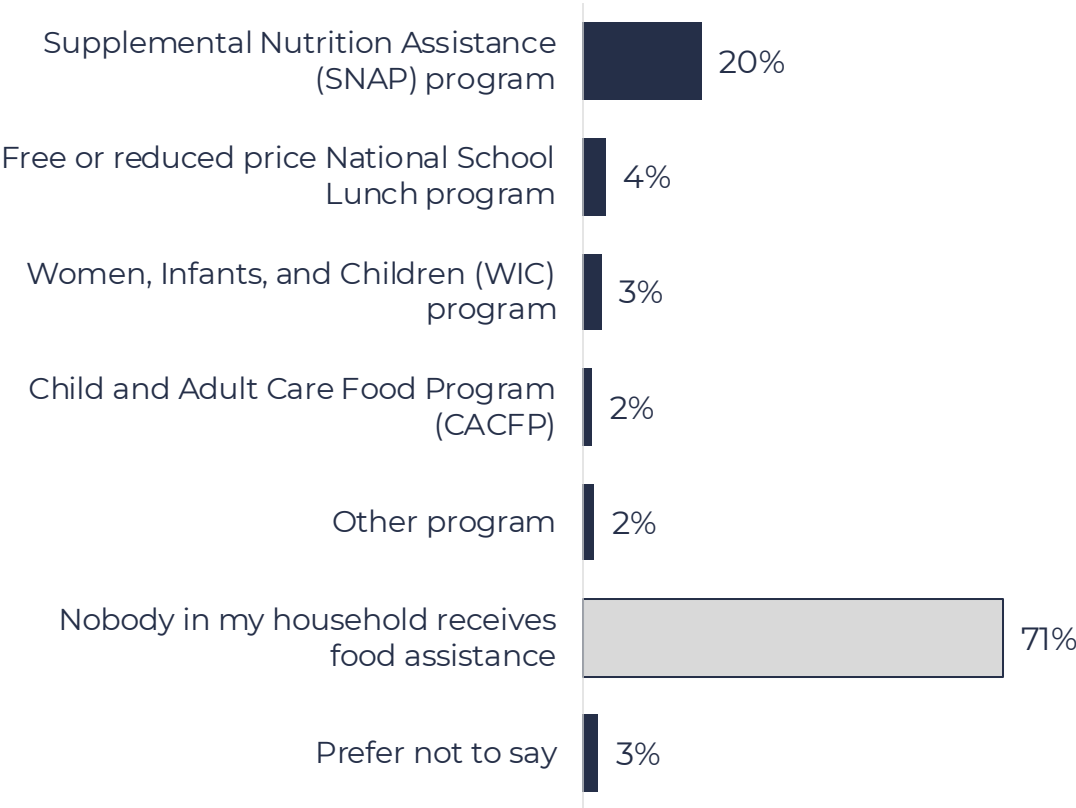


Demographics

INCOME

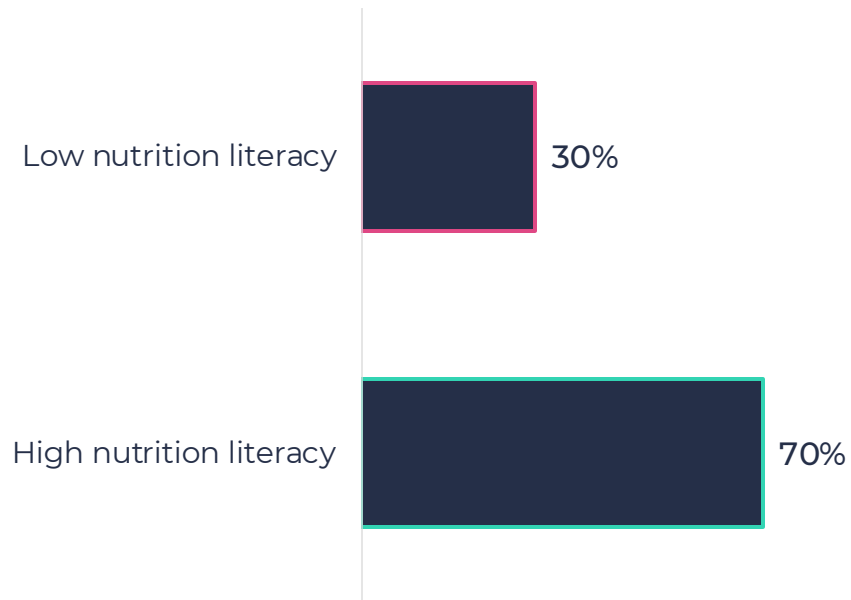


GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE



Demographics

NUTRITION LITERACY



Nutrition literacy was determined using a 3-point quiz containing two questions developed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for use in their consumer research on Front-of-Package Nutrition Labeling, as shown in Appendix D of the [FDA pretest screener](#).

Sums of scores from the 3-point quiz were used to determine nutrition literacy as follows:

- 0 or 1 correct answers = **LOW** nutrition literacy
- 2 or 3 correct answers = **HIGH** nutrition literacy



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