

Consumer Trends: Shoppers Want Quality, Variety in the Meat Aisle

ATLANTA (AMI) — Shoppers place high importance on value, quality and variety when making purchasing decisions in the [meat aisle](#) [1], according to the Power of Meat survey published by American Meat Institute (AMI) and Food Marketing Institute (FMI). The ninth-annual report, conducted by 210 Analytics, LLC, in partnership with The Cryovac Brand, a part of Sealed Air's Food Care Division, was unveiled at the FMI/AMI Annual Meat Conference and explores purchasing, preparation and consumption trends through the eyes of the shopper.

As the number of home-cooked meals containing meat or poultry increased slightly from 3.6 to 3.8 dinners per week, consumption of heat-and-eat and ready-to-eat items also increased. With one-third of shoppers undecided whether they will cook or eat out as little as two hours out from dinner time, value-added products offer tremendous opportunity to capture more of the mealtime dollar.

"The meat and poultry industry is continuously responding to consumer demands," said James H. Hodges, AMI President and CEO. "The variety of convenient fresh and processed products on the market today offer easy, nutritious meal solutions that are indispensable at that critical, 'what's-for-dinner,' decision hour."

Although it remains the leading factor, the Power of Meat suggests that shoppers are trending away from a focus strictly on lower prices when making meat purchasing decisions. Even so, 83 percent of shoppers check promotions across stores, with the paper circular being the most commonly used research tool. These weekly sales promotions are an integral part of meal planning, and for some, channel choice. For 27 percent, the primary store for meat and poultry is different from their primary store for groceries in general. Supermarkets, club stores and butcher shops are the primary beneficiaries of channel switching.

Shoppers cited quality, strong customer service, in-stock performance and variety as the main drivers of meat department satisfaction. As an imperative to departmental satisfaction and shopper retention, customer service largely focused on having knowledgeable meat managers available for questions. Shoppers not only value service, but cite they would absolutely (33 percent) or maybe (53 percent) use hands-on preparation and recipe tips.

"With shoppers looking for even more convenience and value across all channels, food retailers are well positioned to better serve the changing needs of customers and be an integral provider to the meal-time experience," said Mark Baum, senior vice president and chief collaboration officer for FMI. "Because of the breadth and depth of their offerings and services, food retailers can offer personalized and authentic experiences to shoppers that make the best use of their time and fulfill their protein preferences."

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As consumers shop, the report also found that health and wellness continues to represent a growing trend in decision-making in the meat aisle. Thirty-one percent of shoppers put “a lot” of effort into nutritious choices, specifically regarding meat and poultry. The data further suggest a study-high of 78 percent of survey respondents agreeing that fresh meat nutrition information is readily available.

About AMI

AMI represents the interests of packers and processors of beef, pork, lamb, veal and turkey products and their suppliers throughout North America. Together, AMI's members produce 95 percent of the beef, pork, lamb and veal products and 70 percent of the turkey products in the United States. The Institute provides legislative, regulatory, public relations, technical, scientific and educational services to the meat and poultry packing and processing industry. www.meatami.com [2]

About FMI

Food Marketing Institute proudly advocates on behalf of the food retail industry. FMI's U.S. members operate nearly 40,000 retail food stores and 25,000 pharmacies, representing a combined annual sales volume of almost \$770 billion. Through programs in public affairs, food safety, research, education and industry relations, FMI offers resources and provides valuable benefits to more than 1,225 food retail and wholesale member companies in the United States and around the world. FMI membership covers the spectrum of diverse venues where food is sold, including single owner grocery stores, large multi-store supermarket chains and mixed retail stores. For more information, visit www.fmi.org [3] and for information regarding the FMI foundation, visit www.fmifoundation.org [4].

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