

Consumer Survey Reveals Patterns and Preferences in Chicken Purchasing

Chicken is a staple in the American consumer diet, with 53 percent of consumers eating chicken more than four times weekly, according to a recent consumer study conducted by Market Force Information.

The survey of 3,378 consumers aimed to learn what role chicken plays in consumer diets, what drives chicken purchase at point of sale and the potential impact of organic chicken.

Findings from the survey, conducted in May and June, include the following:

- 83 percent of consumers have purchased fresh chicken in the past 60 days.
- 86 percent buy fresh chicken from the meat department at the grocery, 53 percent buy rotisserie chicken and 53 percent buy frozen chicken.
- 21 percent said they had tried a new fresh chicken product in the past 60 days. New recipes, store displays and coupons drove new trials.
- 53 percent said individual packages that are vacuum-packed (allowing consumers to keep fresh only the portion needed and easily freeze the rest in small portion sizes) would interest them.
- 12 percent indicated that chicken with added ingredients that increase the nutritional value would be of interest.
- 41 percent said they specify the type of chicken product they want to buy when writing out their grocery list, and 78 percent added a chicken item to their list because of a promotion or coupon.
- 35 percent do not have a favorite brand and 18 percent indicated that brand was “very important.”

Quality and appearance of the chicken was the biggest point-of-sale purchase driver, at 45 percent. The least important factor was “ingredients listed on labels,” the survey revealed.

Regarding what information consumers wanted to see on fresh chicken labels, the top answer was “farm/country of origin/processing,” at 38 percent. Ten percent indicated they couldn’t find the information they need on the packaging.

Less than one quarter of consumers are purchasing organic chicken even occasionally. More than 40 percent don’t think it’s worth the extra cost and another 40 percent believe there are no nutritional benefits, the survey revealed.

Survey respondents were 76 percent women; 62 percent reported earning more than \$50,000 a year, with 82 percent working full or part time, two-thirds married and half with children at home.