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U.S. Consumers Are Only Somewhat or Slightly Concerned About the Safety of U.S. Food Supply Despite Frequent Food Safety Outbreaks, Reports NPD

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Chicago, October 16, 2012 —Even with frequent food safety outbreaks and recalls, concern levels about the safety of the U.S. food supply remain relatively constant with temporary spikes when news of an outbreak occurs, according to [The NPD Group](#), a leading market research firm. NPD’s [Food Safety Monitor](#), which continually tracks consumer awareness and concern about food safety issues, shows that for the period from January through August 2012, on average, 60 percent of U.S. consumers were somewhat or slightly concerned about the safety of the U.S. food supply, 25 percent were extremely or very concerned, and 15 percent not concerned at all. The food safety concern levels in 2012 are on par with previous years.

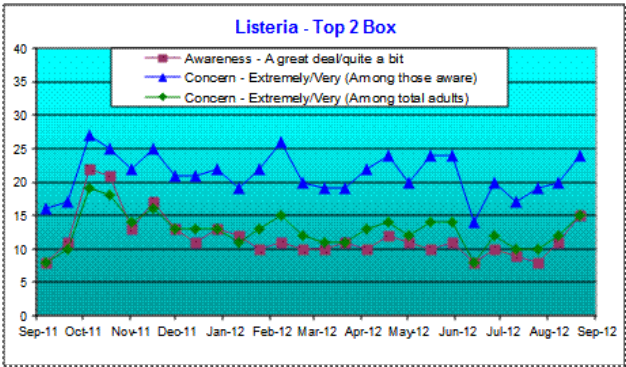
On a bi-weekly basis, when the [Food Safety Monitor](#) survey is conducted, there are fluctuations in the percentages of consumers who are not or are concerned about the safety of the U.S. food supply based on whether or not there is a food safety issue in the news, but the annual averages remain relatively constant.

"How concerned are you about the safety of the U.S. food supply?"
% of adults who are...

	2010 Average	2011 Average	Jan-August 2012 Average
Extremely concerned	10	9	9
Very concerned	16	16	16
Somewhat concerned	29	28	29
Slightly concerned	31	31	30
Not at all concerned	14	15	15

Source: The NPD Group/Food Safety Monitor

There are also spikes and then a leveling off with specific food safety outbreaks, according to NPD. For example, this past summer, in July and August, there were outbreaks and product recalls involving listeria contamination. Awareness of and concern about listeria peaked during the time the outbreaks were widely reported and then leveled off when the news subsided.



Source: the NPD Group/Food Safety Monitor

"The impact of a food recall on consumer attitudes and perceptions often depends on the amount of news coverage received, or the severity of the situation in terms of numbers sickened or dead as a result," says Darren Seifer, NPD food and beverage industry analyst. "Recalls, unfortunately, have become more commonplace, but consumers are creatures of habit. It takes a lot for us to change what we eat."

Food Safety Monitor Methodology

The NPD Group Food Safety Monitor tracks consumer awareness and concern about

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food safety issues including salmonella, e coli, mad cow disease, foot and mouth disease, acrylamide, trans fats, mercury in fish, avian bird flu and listeria. Consumers are also surveyed about their eating intentions of foods including fast food burgers, chicken, ham, steak, fish/seafood, breakfast cereals, butter, milk, cookies and more. Every other week a U.S. representative sample of approximately 500 adults are asked a series of questions related to food safety, and NPD then issues the results in its monthly **Food Safety Monitor**. Since November 2007, the **Food Safety Monitor** survey includes this question: "How concerned are you about the safety of the U.S. food supply?"

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