

THOMSON REUTERS-NPR HEALTH POLL FOOD SAFETY

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THOMSON REUTERS-NPR HEALTH POLL

Each month, the Thomson Reuters-NPR Health Poll surveys approximately 3,000 Americans to gauge attitudes and opinions on a wide range of healthcare issues. Poll results are reported by NPR's Scott Hensley on the health blog Shots (<http://www.npr.org/blogs/health/>) and on air.

Complete survey results are posted here:
<http://healthcare.thomsonreuters.com/npr/>

NPR's reports on the findings are archived here:
http://www.npr.org/templates/archives/archive.php?thingId=137038712&ps=sh_sttag

The Thomson Reuters-NPR Health Poll is powered by the Thomson Reuters PULSE™ Healthcare Survey, an independently funded telephone poll which collects information about health behavior, attitudes and utilization from more than 100,000 U.S. households annually.

The results depicted below represent responses from 3,017 survey participants interviewed from July 1-13, 2011. The margin of error is 1.8 percent.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The survey, repeated from 2010, asked respondents about the safety of the country's food supply. Paradoxically, the poll found less concern than it did a year ago, even though the number of respondents who reported suffering from a serious food-borne illness nearly doubled.

- Among those polled, the majority (57.4%) said they are concerned about the safety of food — a decline from the 2010 level of 61.2%.
- 10.7% of respondents said they are not at all concerned with the safety of their food, up from 6.6% in 2010.
- 11.2% of those polled said they had become sick from something they ate in the last three months, up from 10.5% in 2010. Respondents 65 years or older became ill the least, with only 4.5% reporting a food-derived sickness in 2011.
- The severity of food illness increased from 2010. A year ago, 12.1% of respondents said they became seriously ill due to something they ate. That number climbed to 21.5% in 2011.
- Meat generated more concern than any other type of food: 44.1% of those polled said they had concerns over the safety of meat, followed by fresh produce (30.2%), seafood (20.1%), and dairy products (5.5%).
- Socio-economics appear to play a role in food safety concerns: 53% of respondents who earn less than \$25,000 per year were very concerned with the safety of their food. This far outweighs the level of concern among respondents with higher income.



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SURVEY DATA

Responses in **RED** show inter-year significance
Responses in **BOLD** show intra-year significance

QUESTION 1: Using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is “Not at all Concerned” and 5 is “Very Concerned” in general how concerned are you about the safety of our food?

2011

Age	1: Not At All Concerned	2	3	4	5: Very Concerned
<35	10.7%	9.6%	23.6%	16.4%	39.6%
35 – 64	10.0%	8.5%	21.3%	19.7%	40.5%
65+	12.6%	12.1%	24.6%	18.8%	32.0%
Total	10.7%	9.5%	22.5%	18.9%	38.5%
Income					
< \$25k	10.4%	6.8%	15.2%	14.7%	53.0%
\$25k – \$49.9k	10.9%	8.5%	25.4%	19.6%	35.6%
\$50k – \$99.9k	9.9%	10.6%	24.1%	24.6%	30.8%
\$100k+	11.3%	12.4%	27.2%	17.6%	31.5%
Total	10.7%	9.5%	22.5%	18.9%	38.5%
Education					
High School or Less	13.0%	9.1%	17.7%	14.2%	46.0%
Some College	9.2%	7.0%	25.7%	19.8%	38.3%
College+	10.1%	11.5%	23.6%	21.4%	33.4%
Total	10.7%	9.5%	22.5%	18.9%	38.5%

2010

Age	1: Not At All concerned	2	3	4	5: Very Concerned
<35	5.5%	7.3%	22.2%	19.2%	45.7%
35 – 64	6.6%	9.5%	24.2%	19.6%	40.2%
65+	8.4%	7.3%	25.0%	18.7%	40.6%
Total	6.6%	8.5%	23.7%	19.3%	41.9%
Income					
< \$25k	7.2%	4.8%	24.4%	17.3%	46.3%
\$25k – \$49.9k	5.9%	8.5%	22.8%	20.0%	42.8%
\$50k – \$99.9k	5.1%	11.1%	22.4%	21.4%	40.0%
\$100k+	5.5%	10.5%	26.4%	16.3%	41.2%
Total	6.6%	8.5%	23.7%	19.3%	41.9%
Education					
High School or Less	8.9%	5.1%	21.8%	16.5%	47.8%
Some College	6.3%	7.8%	21.7%	20.1%	44.2%
College+	5.8%	10.4%	25.7%	20.2%	37.9%
Total	6.6%	8.5%	23.7%	19.3%	41.9%



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QUESTION 2: What type of food do you believe poses the greatest risk for food-borne illness?

2011

Age	Meat	Seafood	Dairy Products	Fresh Produce
<35	49.2%	21.1%	5.0%	24.8%
35 – 64	44.3%	18.5%	5.9%	31.3%
65+	39.1%	24.0%	5.0%	31.9%
Total	44.1%	20.1%	5.5%	30.2%
Income				
< \$25k	49.9%	23.4%	5.6%	21.0%
\$25k – \$49.9k	45.6%	18.8%	6.5%	29.1%
\$50k – \$99.9k	44.1%	23.2%	4.4%	28.3%
\$100k+	33.1%	12.6%	5.1%	49.2%
Total	44.1%	20.1%	5.5%	30.2%
Education				
High School or Less	49.4%	21.1%	5.8%	23.7%
Some College	41.3%	21.7%	4.3%	32.7%
College+	42.3%	18.3%	6.2%	33.1%
Total	44.1%	20.1%	5.5%	30.2%

2010

Age	Meat	Seafood	Dairy Products	Fresh Produce
<35	65.2%	10.7%	3.3%	20.9%
35 – 64	45.9%	25.0%	4.3%	24.8%
65+	43.7%	28.5%	4.8%	23.0%
Total	51.0%	21.5%	4.1%	23.4%
Income				
< \$25k	59.2%	18.4%	3.3%	19.1%
\$25k – \$49.9k	47.3%	23.6%	6.2%	22.9%
\$50k – \$99.9k	46.5%	23.4%	3.4%	26.6%
\$100k+	52.6%	14.7%	4.6%	28.2%
Total	51.0%	21.5%	4.1%	23.4%
Education				
High School or Less	54.2%	23.0%	2.9%	19.9%
Some College	53.2%	23.2%	5.5%	18.1%
College+	48.6%	19.9%	3.8%	27.7%
Total	51.0%	21.5%	4.1%	23.4%



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QUESTION 3: What do you think would be the best approach for industry to use to reduce the risk of food-borne illness?

2011

Age	More Inspections	Better Quality Controls	Stiffer Penalties	Increase FDA Oversight	Better Consumer Education
<35	21.7%	33.3%	13.6%	14.0%	17.4%
35 – 64	18.8%	34.0%	13.8%	13.4%	20.0%
65+	24.8%	36.9%	8.0%	13.4%	16.8%
Total	20.6%	34.5%	12.5%	13.5%	18.8%
Income					
< \$25k	26.6%	32.7%	11.4%	12.9%	16.4%
\$25k – \$49.9k	22.1%	32.7%	12.6%	11.7%	20.9%
\$50k – \$99.9k	17.6%	35.5%	12.7%	14.4%	19.8%
\$100k+	14.5%	34.5%	14.9%	17.0%	19.1%
Total	20.6%	34.5%	12.5%	13.5%	18.8%
Education					
High School or Less	26.8%	37.1%	11.2%	9.8%	15.1%
Some College	19.0%	33.7%	14.4%	14.3%	18.6%
College+	17.4%	33.2%	12.1%	15.6%	21.6%
Total	20.6%	34.5%	12.5%	13.5%	18.8%

2010

Age	More Inspections	Better Quality Controls	Stiffer Penalties	Increase FDA Oversight	Better Consumer Education
<35	18.9%	33.4%	16.1%	8.4%	23.2%
35 – 64	20.5%	37.4%	10.7%	13.2%	18.2%
65+	24.0%	39.7%	7.1%	11.4%	17.8%
Total	20.6%	36.7%	11.6%	11.6%	19.5%
Income					
< \$25k	24.2%	35.8%	12.0%	14.3%	13.6%
\$25k – \$49.9k	20.7%	37.8%	8.8%	11.7%	21.0%
\$50k – \$99.9k	19.4%	34.2%	16.2%	8.6%	21.6%
\$100k+	19.9%	38.8%	9.1%	14.4%	17.9%
Total	20.6%	36.7%	11.6%	11.6%	19.5%
Education					
High School or Less	30.5%	28.8%	13.5%	8.4%	18.7%
Some College	18.2%	40.2%	11.5%	12.0%	18.0%
College+	18.0%	37.7%	10.9%	12.6%	20.7%
Total	20.6%	36.7%	11.6%	11.6%	19.5%



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QUESTION 4: In the past 3 months, have you become ill from something that you ate?

2011

Age	Yes	No
<35	19.6%	80.4%
35 — 64	11.1%	88.9%
65+	4.5%	95.5%
Total	11.2%	88.8%

Income		
<\$25k	14.4%	85.6%
\$25k — \$49.9k	8.8%	91.2%
\$50k — \$99.9k	8.8%	91.2%
\$100k+	16.3%	83.7%
Total	11.2%	88.8%

Education		
High School or Less	7.6%	92.4%
Some College	13.2%	86.8%
College+	12.3%	87.7%
Total	11.2%	88.8%

2010

Age	Yes	No
<35	14.8%	85.2%
35 — 64	10.1%	89.9%
65+	4.6%	95.4%
Total	10.5%	89.5%

Income		
<\$25k	12.9%	87.1%
\$25k — \$49.9k	14.0%	86.0%
\$50k — \$99.9k	8.6%	91.4%
\$100k+	9.3%	90.7%
Total	10.5%	89.5%

Education		
High School or Less	10.4%	89.6%
Some College	15.1%	84.9%
College+	8.1%	91.9%
Total	10.5%	89.5%



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QUESTION 5: Did you seek medical treatment?

2011

Age	Yes	No
<35	34.7%	65.3%
35 — 64	27.2%	72.8%
65+	36.2%	63.8%
Total	30.4%	69.6%

Income		
<\$25k	49.3%	50.7%
\$25k — \$49.9k	11.2%	88.8%
\$50k — \$99.9k	22.9%	77.1%
\$100k+	17.2%	82.8%
Total	30.4%	69.6%

Education		
High School or Less	46.6%	53.4%
Some College	42.6%	57.4%
College+	14.3%	85.7%
Total	30.4%	69.6%

2010

Age	Yes	No
<35	32.2%	67.8%
35 — 64	21.2%	78.8%
65+	30.2%	69.8%
Total	26.2%	73.8%

Income		
<\$25k	53.3%	46.7%
\$25k — \$49.9k	18.9%	81.1%
\$50k — \$99.9k	10.8%	89.2%
\$100k+	23.7%	66.3%
Total	26.2%	73.8%

Education		
High School or Less	65.1%	34.9%
Some College	13.8%	86.2%
College+	18.3%	81.7%
Total	26.2%	73.8%



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QUESTION 6: Using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is “Not Very Serious” and 5 is “Very Serious”, how serious was the illness?

2011

	1: Not Very Serious	2	3	4	5: Very Serious
Age					
<35	11.2%	43.1%	2.6%	21.5%	21.5%
35 – 64	21.3%	24.2%	21.1%	8.4%	25.0%
65+	9.2%	8.1%	56.4%	22.5%	3.8%
Total	16.3%	29.5%	18.0%	14.7%	21.5%
Income					
< \$25k	25.6%	18.4%	12.7%	19.0%	24.2%
\$25k – \$49.9k	0.0%	16.6%	46.9%	14.1%	22.4%
\$50k – \$99.9k	0.0%	73.6%	5.5%	20.8%	0.0%
\$100k+	10.1%	55.2%	27.8%	6.9%	0.0%
Total	16.3%	29.5%	18.0%	14.7%	21.5%
Education					
High School or Less	46.0%	30.1%	15.8%	7.1%	1.0%
Some College	2.3%	22.8%	15.2%	19.9%	39.8%
College+	6.4%	43.4%	27.4%	13.6%	9.2%
Total	16.3%	29.5%	18.0%	14.7%	21.5%

2010

	1: Not Very Serious	2	3	4	5: Very Serious
Age					
<35	0.0%	24.5%	75.5%	0.0%	0.0%
35 – 64	9.2%	18.6%	34.9%	14.0%	23.3%
65+	10.5%	5.3%	31.6%	26.3%	26.3%
Total	4.8%	20.4%	54.6%	8.1%	12.1%
Income					
< \$25k	4.5%	12.9%	67.5%	6.1%	9.0%
\$25k – \$49.9k	6.3%	46.3%	34.9%	1.9%	10.7%
\$50k – \$99.9k	0.0%	10.7%	74.0%	4.7%	10.7%
\$100k+	7.7%	15.4%	18.8%	31.2%	26.9%
Total	4.8%	20.4%	54.6%	8.1%	12.1%
Education					
High School or Less	2.7%	1.9%	76.1%	6.3%	12.9%
Some College	2.1%	82.4%	10.8%	0.0%	4.7%
College+	10.9%	7.3%	47.4%	18.0%	16.4%
Total	4.8%	20.4%	54.6%	8.1%	12.1%



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