

SURVEY ON CONSUMER PERSPECTIVES ON NUTRITIOUS FOODS

Conducted by Tootelian & Associates, December 2008

INTRODUCTION: Tootelian & Associates conducted a brief survey of consumer attitudes toward purchasing nutritious food products. The information from this study was to be used to highlight consumer's views about food purchases during difficult economic times.

METHODOLOGY: The population for the study was defined to be consumers 18 years of age or older who reside in six major cities across the United States. This provided some perspectives on consumer perceptions in the Eastern, Central, and Western parts of the United States. Given the nature of the study, it was determined that a telephone survey would be the most appropriate method of data collection.

RESULTS: Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions appear warranted:

- Consumers believe it is best to purchase nutritious snacks as opposed to products such as candy, potato chips, and popcorn. More than four in five respondents believe it is best to purchase more nutritious snacks during difficult times. More women and people 35 years of age and older think it is best to purchase more nutritious snacks than do men and those under 35 years old.
- Purchasing products that keep longer also is important during difficult economic times. More than two-thirds of the respondents think it is better to purchase shelf-stable products that will keep longer and thereby reduce the risk of waste due to spoilage.
- Nutrition will be a priority in purchase decisions among more than two-thirds of the respondents. More women and people 35 years of age and older will make nutrition a priority than will men and those under 35 years old.
- Consumers want nutrition and convenience. More than four in five respondents indicated they are likely to purchase foods that are both nutritious and convenient during difficult economic times. Virtually none of the respondents were unlikely to do so.
- Consumers will pay more for nutrition and convenience. More than two-thirds of the respondents indicated they are willing to pay a little more for foods that are both nutritious and convenient. About three-fourths of the respondents in the East are willing to do so, and more than three in five in the Central and Western areas are willing to pay more. More women and those 35 to 50 years of age are willing to pay more than are men and those under 35 years old or those 65 years of age or older.
- Consumers want nutrition and value when purchasing snacks at grocery stores. Nearly half want both nutrition and value, while more than one-third wants nutrition only.
- Virtually all consumers believe it would be good to incorporate more all-natural foods in their diets in 2009. More than nine in 10 respondents in the Eastern and Central areas, and nearly nine in 10 in the West, think it would be good to do so.

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- Consumers will pay more for all-natural foods. About two-thirds of the respondents said they would pay a little more for all-natural foods. Seven in 10 respondents in the East, and more than six in 10 respondents in the Central and Western areas indicated they would pay a little more.

Summary: Overall, during difficult economic times respondents said it would be best to purchase more nutritious snacks and all-natural foods. Clearly, nutrition is important in their purchase decisions, and appears to be more critical than value. Even though budgets may be tight, consumers said they would be willing to pay a little more for food products that are nutritious, convenient, and all natural. Additionally, women tend to be more likely to want nutritious and all-natural snacks and will pay a little more for them than will men. This is also the case for those who are 35 years of age and older.

Tootelian & Associates is a marketing and management consulting firm located in Sacramento, California. Dr. Dennis H. Tootelian is a Professor of Marketing and Director of the Center for Small Business in the College of Business at California State University, Sacramento. Survey commissioned by Sunsweet Growers, Inc.