**June Dairy Month 2024: Report of Survey Findings**

**Methodology:** The National Frozen & Refrigerated Food Association (NFRA) commissioned Atomik Research to conduct an online survey of 2,008 adults throughout the United States. The margin of error is +/- 2 percentage points with a confidence level of 95 percent. Fieldwork took place between May 7 and May 9, 2024. Atomik Research, a part of 4media group, a part of 4media group, is a creative market research agency.

**Themes:**

***Trending Flexitarian Habits Bridge the Dietary Divide:*** Adopting a flexitarian[[1]](#footnote-2) approach to dairy consumption appears to be a common practice for many adults as a majority often purchase dairy products alongside alternative counterparts, like almond and soy milk. With the versatility of plant-based options and the inherent opportunities for dietary balance, many adults — particularly younger generations and parents — describe themselves as “flexitarians.”

While advancements in creating alternative products with comparable taste to real dairy impress consumers across all ages, Gen Z adults and millennials find these advancements especially impressive compared to older generations. Gen Z and millennial consumers also report more instances of incorporating dairy alternatives into their regular shopping routines.

***Health Nutrition and Perceived Quality of Dairy Aisle Products:*** Data suggests adults prioritize nutrition, health benefits and the occasional brand-name label preference when buying from the dairy aisle.

A majority of adults describe both dairy alternatives and conventional dairy products as healthy. They also report perceiving health benefits specific to yogurt, cheese and eggs as a reason for consuming dairy. Data illustrates other additional associations between nutrition and dairy/dairy alternatives such as macronutrients and awareness of higher protein content. Findings also illustrate a trend in consumers’ propensity to seek out brand-name or more often opt for premium brands when it comes to certain products in the dairy aisle. Yogurt, cheese and butter consistently appear to be the three-most common items that consumers express more particular preferences. Findings from multiple data points imply a significant portion of consumers buy brand-name yogurt, cheese and butter exclusively; and these same three items emerge as the most popular items consumers opt to purchase from premium brands.

**Top Stats:**

***Trending Flexitarian Habits Bridge the Dietary Divide:***

* 61% of U.S. adults say they often purchase dairy and dairy alternatives on the same trip to the grocery store.
  + More than 7 in 10 Gen Z (71%; n=235) and millennial (72%; n=643) adults say they often purchase dairy and dairy alternative products on the same trip to the grocery store.
  + 70% of parents with children living in their household (n=1,000) say they often purchase dairy and dairy-alternative products on the same trip to the grocery store.
* More than 2 in 5 U.S. adults (43%) say they purchase dairy alternatives on every trip or every other trip to the grocery store. More widely, 71% of U.S. adults say they purchase dairy alternatives occasionally or more.
  + More than 4 in 5 Gen Z adults (86%; n=235) and millennials (81%; n=643) say they occasionally, or more often, purchase diary alternatives on their trips to the grocery store.
  + More than half of parents (54%; n=1,000) say they purchase dairy alternatives on every trip or every other trip to the grocery store.
* 2 in 5 U.S. adults (40%) describe themselves as a “flexitarian.”
  + Among U.S. adults, roughly half of Gen Z respondents (53%; n=235) and millennials (49%; n=643) identify as flexitarians when it comes to their dairy consumption.
* Nearly 4 in 5 U.S. adults (79%) indicate they are impressed by advancements in dairy alternatives that have a taste comparable to real dairy products.
  + Younger adults express being impressed by the advancements in dairy alternatives more frequently than their older generational cohorts: Over 3 in 5 Gen Z adults (64%; n=235) and millennials (63%; n=643) say they are impressed or very impressed by the advancements in dairy alternatives that have a taste comparable to real dairy products, while less than half of Gen X adults (48%; n=564) and 35% of baby boomers (n=534) say the same.

***Health Nutrition and Perceived Quality of Dairy Aisle Products:***

* Nearly 3 in 4 U.S. adults (74%) say they consume *eggs* from the dairy aisle for the health benefits. Further, more than 3 in 5 of U.S. adults say they consume *yogurt* (67%) and *cheese* (63%) from the dairy aisle for health benefits.
  + Over a third of millennials (35%; n=643) say they consume plant-based milk for the health benefits.
* Dairy alternatives are more often associated with health than taste. Nearly 3 in 5 U.S. adults (57%) describe dairy alternatives such as almond milk or oat milk as “healthy,” while nearly 2 in 5 (38%) describe dairy alternatives as “tasty.”
  + Nearly 2 in 3 Gen Z adults (65%; n=235) and 61% of millennials (n=643) describe dairy alternatives, such as almond milk or soy milk, as healthy.
* Over twice as many adults (2.21) say that *macronutrients* (17%) are more important to them than those who say *calories* are more important (8%), while more than half of U.S. adults (52%) say that macronutrients and calories are equally important when looking at labels on dairy and dairy alternative products.
* More than 4 in 5 U.S. adults (81%) agree that consuming dairy products such as yogurt or cottage cheese is an easy way to eat a high protein breakfast quickly.
* Although a substantial number of U.S. adults exclusively opt for brand-name yogurt (45%), a considerable proportion also prefer brand-name options for cheese (39%) and butter (39%).
* 2 in 5 U.S. adults (40%) say they often opt to purchase premium brand yogurt in the dairy aisle, followed by cheese (37%) and butter (34%).

**Other Notable Consumer Insights:**

* Within the past couple of years, 76% of U.S. adults say they have noticed an increase in private label, widely known as store-brand or off-brand, organic options in the dairy aisle at grocery stores.
* Nearly 2 in 3 U.S. adults (65%) say they often purchase something in the dairy aisle that wasn’t on their shopping list or that they had not previously planned to buy.
  + Nearly 3 in 4 Gen Z (74%; n=235) and millennial (74%; n=643) adults say that they often purchase something in the dairy aisle that wasn’t on their shopping list or that they had not previously planned to buy, while 65% of Gen X (n=564) and 53% of baby boomers (n=534) say the same.
  + Over 3 in 4 parents (76%; n=1,000) say they often purchase something in the dairy aisle that wasn’t on their shopping list or that they had not previously planned to buy.

1. A **flexitarian** is someone who has a diet that consists of plant-based foods but allows for the flexibility to add animal products to their diet as they see fit. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)