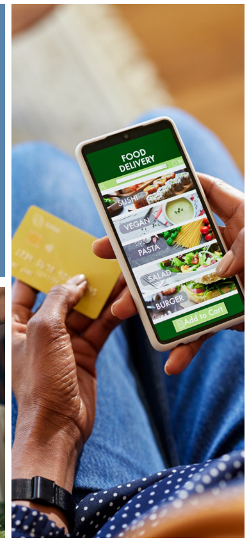
USDA Agricultural Marketing Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Local Food Systems Response to COVID

Consumer Food Insights 3.0

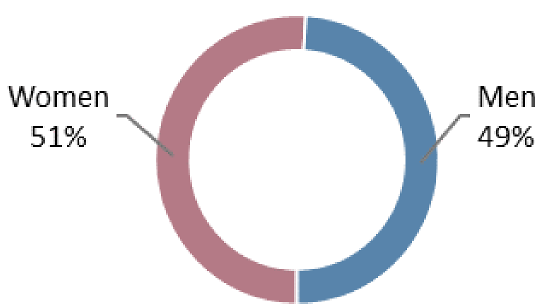


Survey Overview

A nationwide survey was conducted online from December 2023 to February 2024 through Qualtrics, with quotas set to ensure a demographically balanced sample[1] (with the exception of gender as the survey was targeted to the primary food shopper). Following the format of past COVID 1.0 and 2.0 surveys conducted by this team, a variety of demographic and COVID-19-related questions were asked to capture food behavior trends, including: 1) purchases of food through a variety of market channels, 2) use of online platforms, 3) changes in food shopping behavior from October 2022 to October 2023, 4) motivations to choose various food channels, and 5) confidence and values aligned with various food issues and institutions.

To ensure that our sample was representative of the US population with regard to gender, race, ethnicity, income, and education, we collected and checked demographics against US Census data. A slightly higher share of the sample was white, at the highest income levels, and had a child under 18 in their household compared to US Census data. The research team determined that these slight derivations from US averages were not significantly different: so, we present this Consumer Food Insights series with confidence that findings presented on food shopping behavior are representative of US shoppers (and in some cases will explore differences across demographics). More detail on these demographics are presented below.

Gender

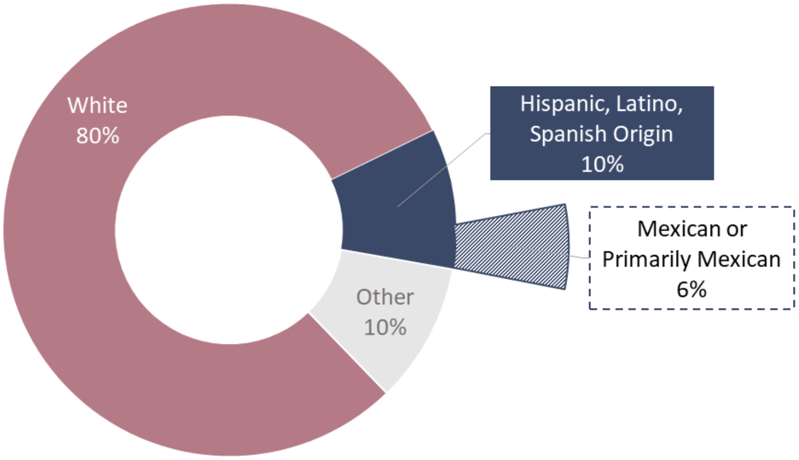


The sample reflected a slightly higher percentage of women respondents than the US national average. However, this was expected since the survey asked for the main food shopper in the household.

1 Using the statistics from the 2020 US Census data, we set quotas to obtain a balanced sample of responses that is representative of the US population. Some respondents preferred not to answer questions about race, gender, ethnicity, income, and education, but overall, we collected enough information for all respondents and obtained over a 95% response.

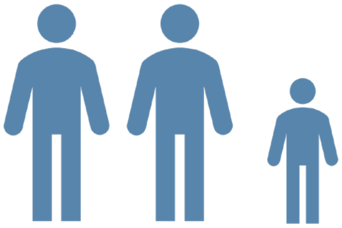
Race

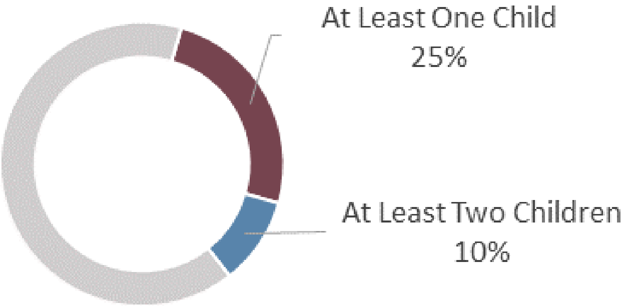
The majority (80%) of respondents identified as white. Approximately 10% of the sample identified as Hispanic, Latino, or of Spanish origin, and of that total, the majority (6%) of respondents identified as Mexican or primarily Mexican.



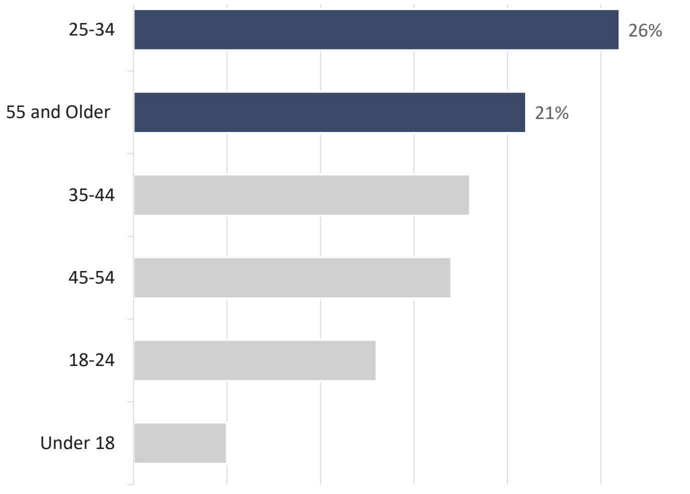
Household

Average of 2.67 members

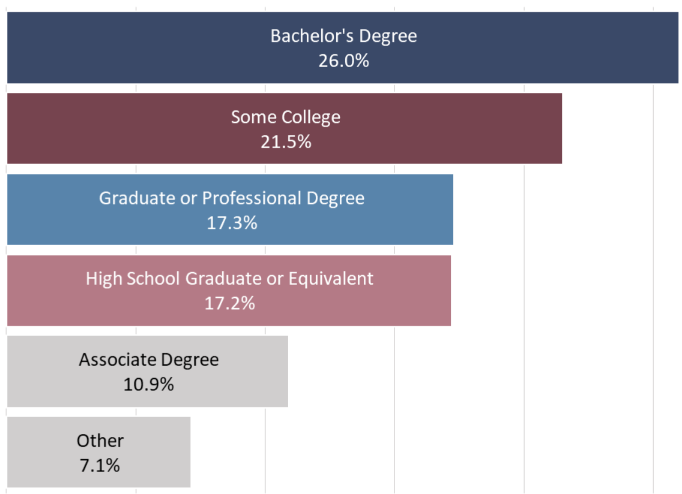




Age



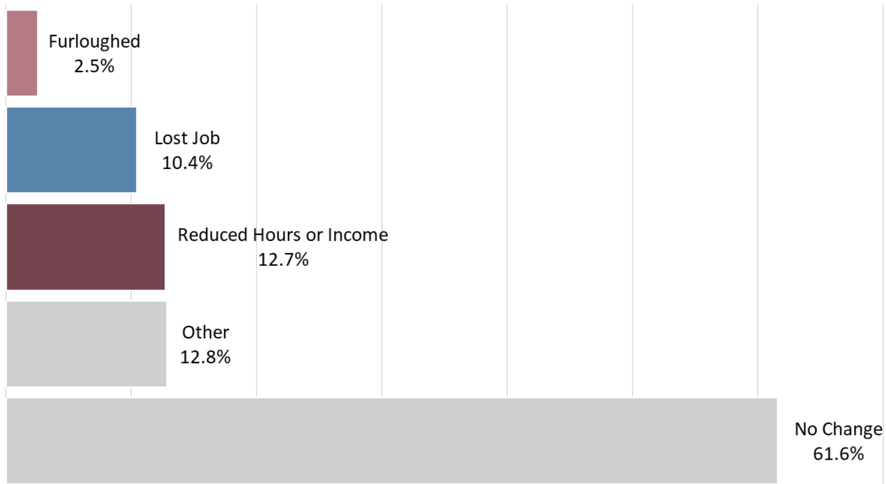
Education



Overview of the 2023 Consumer Survey on Food Shopping Behaviors Since the Pandemic: A 2024 Update

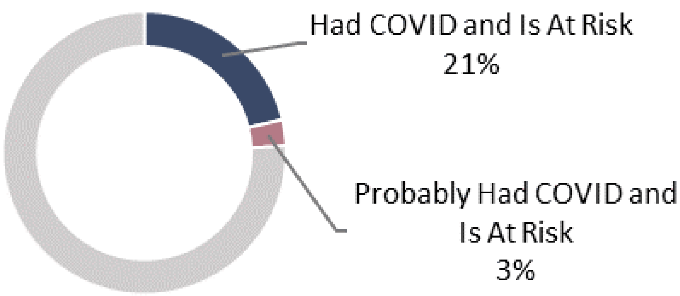
The COVID-19 pandemic led to several economic and health disruptions.

This study finds that since March 2020, 26% of respondents lost their job, had a reduction in their hours or income, or were furloughed.



The risk of household exposure to COVID-19 likely affected consumer shopping behavior as well. About 24% of respondents indicated they were at risk for and contracted COVID-19, or probably contracted COVID-19.

We asked respondents how their food purchasing behaviors changed in terms of products purchased and the variety of food markets shopped. Nearly 66% of respondents indicated they are spending more money on food since early 2020.



Created through a cooperative agreement between the United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service and Colorado State University.

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