

THE PANDEMIC'S LASTING

..... IMPRINT ON MEAT CONSUMERS



Throughout 2020, Midan regularly surveyed meat consumers to understand how COVID-19 impacted their meat buying and cooking habits. As the pandemic slogged into the new year, we reached out to consumers again in January 2021 to get a pulse on how their meat attitudes and behaviors continued to evolve.

Several takeaways point to how COVID-19 has made a long-lasting imprint on today's meat consumers:



THE PANDEMIC LOCKDOWN ACHIEVED WHAT THE MEAT INDUSTRY HAS BEEN WORKING ON FOR YEARS: IT GOT AMERICANS COMFORTABLE COOKING MEAT.

And even as shopping and eating habits begin to normalize

post-pandemic, a significant number (59%) of meat eaters say they will continue to experiment with different ways to cook meat/chicken.

ACTION STEP: Make the most of the ongoing interest in dining at home - offer easy, visually appealing recipes that help newly confident home cooks find exciting ways to prepare favorite cuts or experiment with less-familiar cuts to spruce up their dinner rotation.



THE ECONOMIC FALLOUT FROM COVID-19 MEANS MORE CONSUMERS ARE TRYING TO MAKE DO WITH LESS.

In January, 33% of consumers reported a decrease in their household income - the highest level since the pandemic started.

Of those who have had a drop in income, nearly 60% lost more than a quarter of their income.

ACTION STEP: Anticipate greater demand for budget-friendly grinds, value packs and affordable meal solutions as many consumers look to stretch their dollars at the meat case. More careful budgeting could also translate to fewer consumers eating out as restaurants begin re-opening indoor dining.



THE CORONAVIRUS HAS DRIVEN A SHARPER FOCUS ON PERSONAL HEALTH.

Most consumers claim they are pursuing health and wellness changes in 2021, with 3 in 5 indicating they plan on eating healthier. 55% said they were

going to seek out healthier types and cuts of meat/chicken during the next month.

ACTION STEP: Use on-pack labeling and point-of-sale messaging to highlight meat's nutritional profile - it's a critical step in giving health-conscious meat eaters, including flexitarians, permission to eat animal proteins without guilt.



COVID-19 OPENED THE DOOR A LITTLE WIDER FOR ALTERNATIVE MEATS:

The percent of consumers who tried plant-based meats for the first time during the pandemic increased from 16% in July to 23% in January. 27% of consumers indicate they eat plant-based

meats regularly (at least monthly) and around 50% of consumers who have at least tried it say they plan to eat it regularly in the future.

ACTION STEP: Plant-based meats are only gaining traction, thanks in part to loud and expensive marketing. To keep animal proteins on the plate, the traditional meat industry must amp up its own consumer communications with unified, consistent messaging.