

Press release

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Low-sugar and GMO-free are top factors when deciding what to eat or drink

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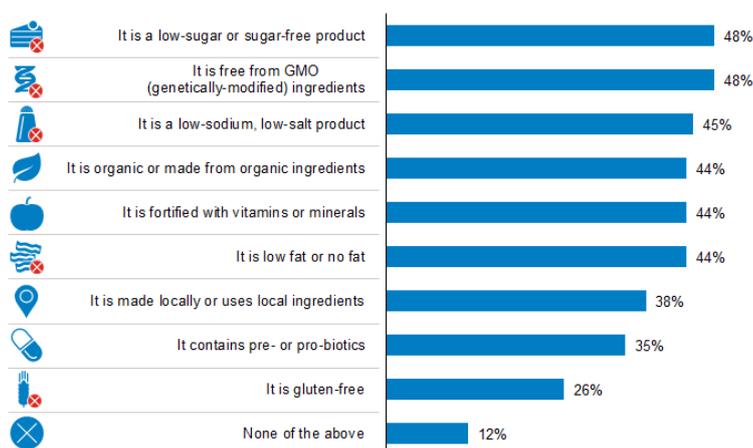
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Factors rated “very” or “extremely” important by consumers

Nuremberg, October 25, 2017 – Nearly half of consumers report that “low sugar or sugar-free” and “free from GMO ingredients” are very or extremely important factors when deciding which food or beverage product to eat or drink. These factors top the list, just ahead of factors such as low-salt, organic, low fat, or fortified with vitamins or minerals.

GfK asked 23,000 consumers online in 17 countries how important certain factors are, from a given list, when deciding what to eat or drink. Nearly half (48 percent) report that products being low-sugar or sugar-free is “extremely” or “very” important to them, and an equal number say the same for products being free from genetically-modified (GMO) ingredients.

Low sodium or low-salt products came third highest, with 45 percent. And fourth place was a tie between organic products, low fat or no-fat products, and products that are fortified with vitamins or minerals. These all came equal with 44 percent of consumers rating these as very or extremely important when making their decision on what to eat or drink.



Source: GfK survey among 23,000 Internet users (ages 15+) in 17 countries – multiple answers possible – Top 2 boxes “very important” and “extremely important”

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Organic, pro-biotic, fortified and gluten-free products are more important to people aged under 40

The most selective food and drink shoppers are those aged 30-39 years old. This group nearly always has the highest percentage rating factors as “very” or “extremely” important.

Also of note is that products which are organic, fortified with vitamins or minerals, pre- or pro-biotic or gluten-free are more important amongst people aged under 40 years old than amongst those aged 40 plus.

Impacts of income and gender

As expected, people from high income households set consistently higher importance on all the factors, compared to the lower income households.

Among high income households, the most important factors are GMO-free (55 percent), low sugar or sugar-free (54 percent) and low sodium or low salt (52 percent). Among low income households, GMO-free and low sugar or sugar-free are also the top two, but mentioned by a significantly lower percentage (44 percent and 43 percent respectively). And the third most important factor for this group is a tie between organic products and products fortified with vitamins or minerals (41 percent).

Gender makes next to no difference in how people rate the decision factors. Men are very slightly more likely than women to place importance on local products, fortified products, pre- or pro-biotic and gluten-free, but the difference in each case is only three percentage points.

Chinese are the most selective on what to eat and drink, out of 17 countries surveyed

In eight out of the nine decision factors researched, China tops the list for having the highest percentage placing importance on that item, when deciding what to eat or drink. The exception is for locally produced products, where Italy takes the lead.

The greatest difference between China and other nations is seen when it comes to preference for pre- or pro-biotic products. Here, China is 21 percentage points ahead of the next closest country with over half of its online population placing high importance on this factor.

DECISION FACTORS ON WHAT TO EAT OR DRINK

Top 5 countries per factor

<p>It is a low-sugar or sugar-free product</p>	<p>It is free from GMO (genetically-modified) ingredients</p>	<p>It is a low-sodium, low-salt product</p>	<p>It is organic or made from organic ingredients</p>	<p>It is fortified with vitamins or minerals</p>
57% China 52% Brazil 52% Mexico 50% Spain 49% Italy	60% China 49% Italy 49% Mexico 45% Spain 45% France	57% China 53% Brazil 44% Mexico 42% South Korea 39% France	58% China 52% Russia 49% Brazil 46% Mexico 42% Italy	57% China 54% Brazil 48% Mexico 43% Argentina 39% Italy
<p>It is low fat or no fat</p>	<p>It is made locally or uses local ingredients</p>	<p>It contains pre- or pro-biotics</p>	<p>It is gluten-free</p>	<p>None of these</p>
55% China 51% Brazil 49% Mexico 45% Spain 44% Italy	49% Italy 43% China 43% Mexico 41% France 40% Spain	54% China 33% Mexico 33% South Korea 32% Brazil 27% USA	39% China 29% Brazil 28% Mexico 24% South Korea 20% Russia	29% Netherlands 24% Japan 22% Belgium 20% UK 19% Australia

Source: GfK survey among 23,000 Internet users (ages 15+) in 17 countries – multiple answers possible – Top 2 boxes “very important” and “extremely important” – rounded
International average is weighted based on the size of each country proportional to the other countries

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Download [GfK's complimentary report on “factors when deciding what to eat and drink”](#) to see key demographic data for each of the 17 countries included in this survey.

GfK combines these self-reported insights with data from areas such as point of sales tracking, consumer panels and geo-marketing to help clients successfully target high-potential audiences both globally and within specific countries.

-Ends-

About the study

The survey question asked, “When deciding which food or beverage product to eat or drink, how important are the following in making your decision?”, with options listed as It is organic or made from organic ingredients; It is made locally or uses local ingredients; It is a low-sugar or sugar-free product; It is low fat or no fat; It is a low-sodium, low-salt product; It is fortified with vitamins or minerals; It contains pre- or pro-biotics; It is free from GMO (genetically-modified) ingredients; It is gluten-free.

GfK interviewed 23,000 consumers online in 17 countries in the summer 2017. Data are weighted to reflect the demographic composition of the online population aged 15+ in each market. The global average given in this release is weighted, based on the size of each country proportional to the other countries.

Countries included are Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Russia, South Korea, Spain, UK and USA



About GfK

GfK is the trusted source of relevant market and consumer information that enables its clients to make smarter decisions. More than 13,000 market research experts combine their passion with GfK's long-standing data science experience. This allows GfK to deliver vital global insights matched with local market intelligence from more than 100 countries. By using innovative technologies and data sciences, GfK turns big data into smart data, enabling its clients to improve their competitive edge and enrich consumers' experiences and choices.

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